



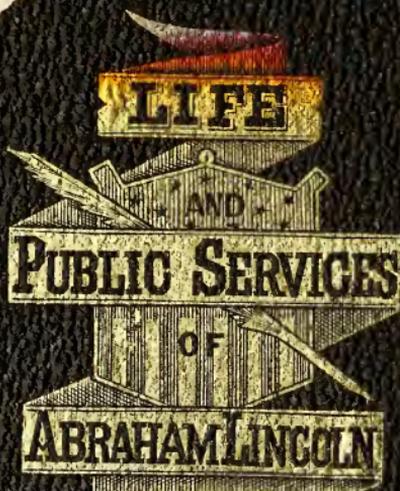
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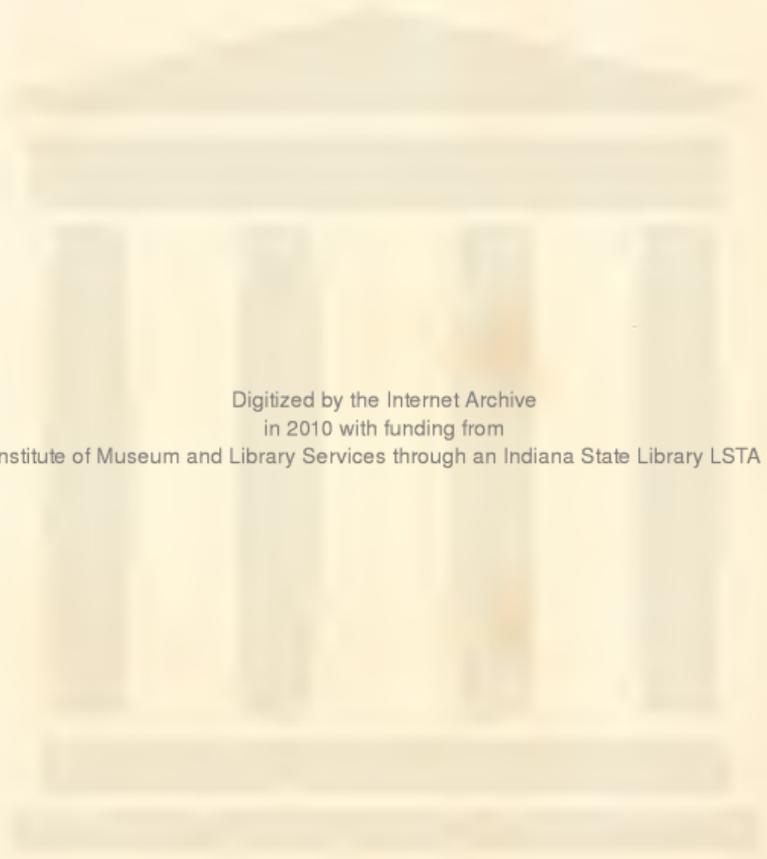


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POTTER





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"If this country cannot be saved without giving up the principle of Liberty, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it."

From Mr. Lincoln's Speech at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, February 21, 1861.

"I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

Springfield, Illinois, June, 1858.

"I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which the Revolution was made."

Trenton, New Jersey, February 21, 1861.

"Having thus chosen our course, without guile and with pure purpose, let us renew our trust in God, and go forward without fear and with manly hearts."

Message, July 5, 1861.

"In giving freedom to the slaves, we assure freedom to the free; honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve."

Message, December 1, 1862.

"I hope peace will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time."

Springfield Letter, August 26, 1863.

"The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what the brave men, living and dead, did here."

Speech at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863.

"I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the Acts of Congress."

Amnesty Proclamation, December 8, 1863.

"I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me."

Letter to A. G. Hodges, April 4, 1864.

"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

Last Inaugural, March 4, 1865.





A. Lincoln

"WITH MALICE TOWARDS NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL, WITH FIRMNESS IN THE RIGHT, AS GOD GIVES
US TO SEE THE RIGHT, LET US STRIVE ON TO FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN"

A. LINCOLN

LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

CONTAINING

HIS EARLY HISTORY AND POLITICAL CAREER; TOGETHER
WITH THE SPEECHES, MESSAGES, PROCLAMATIONS AND
OTHER OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF
HIS EVENTFUL ADMINISTRATION.

BY FRANK CROSBY,

MEMBER OF THE PHILADELPHIA BAR.

"LET ALL THE ENDS THOU AIM'ST AT BE THY COUNTRY'S,
THY GOD'S AND TRUTH'S; THEN IF THOU FALL'ST
THOU FALL'ST A BLESSED MARTYR."

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PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN E. POTTER,
No. 617 SANSON STREET.
1865.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by

JOHN E. POTTER.

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern
District of Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA :

COLLINS, PRINTER, 705 JAYNE STREET.

DEDICATED

TO THE GOOD AND TRUE

OF THE NATION

REDEEMED—REGENERATED—DISENTHRALLED.

PREFACE.



AN attempt has been made in the following pages to portray Abraham Lincoln, mainly in his relations to the country at large during his eventful administration.

With this view, it has not been deemed necessary to cumber the work with the minute details of his life prior to that time. This period has, therefore, been but glanced at, with a care to present enough to make a connected whole. His Congressional career, and his campaign with Senator Douglas are presented in outline, yet so, it is believed, that a clear idea of these incidents in his life can be obtained.

After the time of his election as President, however, a different course of treatment has been pursued. Thenceforward, to the close of his life, especial pains have been taken to present everything which should show him as he was—the Statesman persistent, resolute, free from boasting or ostentation, destitute of hate, never exultant, guarded in his prophecies, threatening none at home or abroad, indulging in no utopian dreams of a blissful future, moving quietly, calmly, conscientiously, irresistibly on to the end he saw with clearest vision.

Yet, even in what is presented as a complete record of his administration, too much must not be expected. It is impossible, for example, to thoroughly dissect the events of the great Rebellion in a work like the present. Nothing of the kind has been attempted. The prominent features only have been sketched; and that solely for the purpose of bringing into the distinct foreground him whose life is under consideration.

Various Speeches, Proclamations, and Letters, not vitally essential to the unity of the main body of the work, yet valuable as affording illustrations of the man—have been collected in the Appendix.

Imperfect as this portraiture must necessarily be, there is one conciliatory thought. The subject needs no embellishment. It furnishes its own setting. The acts of the man speak for themselves. Only such an arrangement is needed as shall show the bearing of each upon the other, the development of each, the processes of growth.

Those words of the lamented dead which nestle in our hearts so tenderly—they call for no explanation. Potent, searching, taking hold of our consciences, they will remain with us while reason lasts.

Nor will the people's interest be but for the moment. The baptism of blood to which the Nation has been called, cannot be forgotten for generations. And while memories of him abide, there will inevitably be associated with them the placid, quiet face, not devoid of mirth—its patient, anxious, yet withal hopeful expression—the sure, elastic step—the clearly cut, sharply defined speech of him, who, under Providence, was to lead us through the trial and anguish of those bitter days to the rest and refreshing of a peace, whose dawn only, alas! he was to see.

Though this work may not rise to the height required, it is hoped that it is not utterly unworthy of the subject. Such as it is—a labor of love—it is offered to those who loved and labored with the patriot and hero, with the earnest desire that it may not be regarded an unwarrantable intrusion upon ground on which any might hesitate to venture.

F. C.

Philadelphia, June, 1865.

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LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

CHAPTER I.

BOYHOOD AND EARLY MANHOOD.

Preliminary—Birth of Abraham Lincoln—Removal from Kentucky—At Work—Self Education—Personal Characteristics—Another Removal—Trip to New Orleans—Becomes Clerk—Black Hawk War—Engages in Politics—Successive Elections to the Legislature—Anti-Slavery Protest—Commences Practice as a Lawyer—Traits of Character—Marriage—Return to Politics—Election to Congress.

THE leading incidents in the early life of the men who have most decidedly influenced the destinies of our republic, present a striking similarity. The details, indeed, differ; but the story, in outline, is the same—"the short and simple annals of the poor."

Of obscure parentage—accustomed to toil from their tender years—with few facilities for the education of the school—the most struggled on, independent, self-reliant, till by their own right hands they had hewed their way to the positions for which their individual talents and peculiarities stamped them as best fitted. Children of nature, rather than of art, they have ever in their later years—amid scenes and associations entirely dissimilar to those with which in youth and early manhood, they were familiar—retained somewhat indicative of their origin and training. In speech or in action—often in both—they have smacked of their native soil. If they have lacked the gr^ace of the courtier, ample compensation has been afforded in the honesty of the man. If their

Where Born.

Early Life.

Education.

address was at times abrupt, it was at least frank and unmis-
takable. Both friend and foe knew exactly where to find
them. Unskilled in the doublings of the mere politician or
the trimmer, they have borne themselves straight forward to
the points whither their judgment and conscience directed.
Such men may have been deemed fit subjects for the jests
and sneers of more cultivated Europeans, but they are none
the less dear to us as Americans—will none the less take their
place among those whose names the good, throughout the
world, will not willingly let die.

Of this class, pre-eminently, was the statesman whose life
and public services the following pages are to exhibit.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, Sixteenth President of the United
States, son of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln—the former a
Kentuckian, the latter a Virginian—was born February 12th,
1809, near Hodgenville, the county-seat of what is now known
as La Rue county, Kentucky. He had one sister, two years
his senior, who died, married, in early womanhood; and his
only brother, his junior by two years, died in childhood.

When nine years of age, he lost his mother, the family
having, two years previously, removed to what was then the
territory of Indiana, and settled in the southern part, near
the Ohio river, about midway between Louisville and Evans-
ville. The thirteen years which the lad spent here inured
him to all the exposures and hardships of frontier life. An
active assistant in farm duties, he neglected no opportunity
of strengthening his mind, reading with avidity such instruc-
tive works as he could procure—on winter evenings, often-
times, by the light of the blazing fire-place. As satisfaction
for damage accidentally done to a borrowed copy of Weems'
Life of Washington—the only one known to be in the neigh-
borhood—he pulled fodder for two days for the owner.

At twenty years of age, he had reached the height of
nearly six feet and four inches, with a comparatively slender
yet uncommonly strong, muscular frame—a youthful giant

Removes to Illinois.

Visits New Orleans.

Black Hawk War.

among a race of giants. Morally, he was proverbially honest, conscientious, and upright.

In 1830, his father again emigrated, halting for a year on the north fork of the Sangamon river, Illinois, but afterwards pushing on to Coles county, some seventy miles to the eastward, on the upper waters of the Kaskaskia and Embarrass, where his adventurous life ended in 1851, he being in his seventy-third year. The first year in Illinois the son spent with the father; the next he aided in constructing a flat-boat, on which, with other hands, a successful trip to New Orleans and back was made. This city—then the El Dorado of the Western frontiersman—had been visited by the young man, in the same capacity, when he was nineteen years of age.

Returning from this expedition, he acted for a year as clerk for his former employer, who was engaged in a store and flouring mill at New Salem, twenty miles below Springfield. While thus occupied, tidings reached him of an Indian invasion on the western border of the State—since known as the Black Hawk war, from an old Sac chief of that name, who was the prominent mover in the matter. In New Salem and vicinity, a company of volunteers was promptly raised, of which young Lincoln was elected captain—his first promotion. The company, however, having disbanded, he again enlisted as a private, and during the three months' service of this, his first short military campaign, he faithfully discharged his duty to his country, persevering amid peculiar hardships and against the influences of older men around him.

With characteristic humor and sarcasm, while commenting, in a Congressional speech during the canvass of 1848, upon the efforts of General Cass's biographers to exalt their idol into a military hero, he thus alluded to this episode in his life:

“By the way, Mr. Speaker, did you know I am a military hero? Yes, sir, in the days of the Black Hawk war, I fought, bled, and came away. Speaking of General Cass's career,

Speech.

Engages in Politics.

Elected to the Legislature.

reminds me of my own. I was not at Stillman's defeat, but I was about as near it as Cass to Hull's surrender; and like him, I saw the place very soon afterward. It is quite certain I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent a musket pretty badly on one occasion. If Cass broke his sword, the idea is, he broke it in desperation; I bent the musket by accident. If General Cass went in advance of me in picking whortleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon the wild onions. If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did, but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry.

"Mr. Speaker, if I should ever conclude to doff whatever our Democratic friends may suppose there is of black-cockade Federalism about me, and, thereupon, they should take me up as their candidate for the Presidency, I protest they shall not make fun of me as they have of General Cass, by attempting to write me into a military hero."

This bit of adventure over, Mr. Lincoln—who had determined to become a lawyer, in common with most energetic, enterprising young men of that period and section—embarked in politics, warmly espousing the cause of Henry Clay, in a State at that time decidedly opposed to his great leader, and received a gratifying evidence of his personal popularity where he was best known, in securing an almost unanimous vote in his own precinct in Sangamon county as a candidate for representative in the State Legislature, although a little later in the same canvass General Jackson, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, led his competitor, Clay, one hundred and fifty-five votes.

While pursuing his law studies, he engaged in land surveying as a means of support. In 1834, not yet having been admitted to the bar—a backwoodsman in manner, dress, and expression—tall, lank, and by no means prepossessing—he was first elected to the Legislature of his adopted State,

ploy as laborers, within and from said States, so many persons of African descent as can be advantageously used for military or naval purposes, giving them reasonable wages for their labor.

“*Third.* That, as to both property, and persons of African descent, accounts shall be kept sufficiently accurate and in detail to show quantities and amounts, and from whom both property and such persons shall have come, as a basis upon which compensation can be made in proper cases; and the several departments of this government shall attend to and perform their appropriate parts toward the execution of these orders. “By order of the President.

“EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.”

And on the twenty-fifth of July, by proclamation, the President warned all persons to cease participating in aiding, countenancing, or abetting the rebellion, and to return to their allegiance, under penalty of the forfeitures and seizures provided by an act “to suppress insurrections, to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate the property of rebels, and for other purposes,” approved July 17th, 1862.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN.

President's War Order—Reason for the same—Results in West and South-west—Army of the Potomac—Presidential Orders—Letter to McClellan—Order for Army Corps—The Issue of the Campaign—Unfortunate Circumstances—President's Speech at Union Meeting—Comments—Operations in Virginia and Maryland—In the West and South-west.

EARLY in 1862 appeared the following :

“*Executive Mansion, Washington, January 27th, 1862.*

[President's General War Order, No. 1.]

“ORDERED, That the 22d day of February, 1862, be the day for a general movement of the land and naval forces of the United States against the insurgent forces.

Military Successes.

Army of the Potomac.

“That especially the Army at and about Fortress Monroe, the Army of the Potomac, the Army of Western Virginia, the Army near Mumfordsville, Kentucky, the Army and Flotilla at Cairo, and a Naval force in the Gulf of Mexico, be ready for a movement on that day.

“That all other forces, both land and naval, with their respective commanders, obey existing orders for the time, and be ready to obey additional orders when duly given.

“That the Heads of Departments, and especially the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, with all their subordinates, and the General-in-chief, with all other commanders and subordinates of land and naval forces, will severally be held to their strict and full responsibilities for the prompt execution of this order.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

In thus resuming whatever of his constitutional duties as Commander-in-chief of the army and navy might have been temporarily devolved upon others, and directing immediate and energetic aggressive measures, the President only acted as the exponent of the popular feeling, which had become manifest, of dissatisfaction at the apparently inexcusable want of action in military affairs.

In the West and South-west followed the successful battle at Mill Spring, Kentucky; the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, compelling the evacuation of Nashville, and ridding Kentucky of any organized rebel force; the hardly contested, but successful battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, relieving Missouri, in a great degree; victory for our arms wrested from the jaws of defeat at Shiloh; and the occupation of New Orleans, giving control of the Mouth of the Mississippi.

What at the East?—Roanoke Island.

Touching the movements of the Army of the Potomac, to which the country looked so expectantly for grand results, efficiently officered, thoroughly disciplined, and splendidly equipped as it was known or supposed to be, the first diffi-

President's Order.

Letter to McClellan.

culty was to fix upon a plan. For the purpose of leading the attention of its General to something like a definite decision however, the order of January 27th was succeeded by the following :

“*Executive Mansion, Washington, January 31st, 1862.*”

“ORDERED, That all the disposable force of the Army of the Potomac, after providing safely for the defence of Washington, be formed into an expedition for the immediate object of seizing and occupying a point upon the railroad south-westward of what is known as Manassas Junction ; all details to be in the discretion of the Commander-in-chief, and the expedition to move before, or on the twenty-second day of February next.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

General McClellan objecting to this movement and earnestly urging a plan of advance upon Richmond by the Lower Rappahannock with Urbana as a base, the President addressed him the following letter :

“*Executive Mansion, Washington, February 3d, 1862.*”

“MY DEAR SIR:—You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac ; yours to be done by the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across land to the terminus of the railroad on the York river ; mine to move directly to a point on the railroad south-west of Manassas.

“If you will give satisfactory answers to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours :

“First. Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of *time* and *money* than mine ?

“Second, Wherein is a victory *more certain* by your plan than mine ?

“Third. Wherein is a victory *more valuable* by your plan than mine ?

“Fourth. In fact, would it not be *less* valuable in this ;

 Organization into Corps.

 President's War Order

that it would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would ?

"Fifth. In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine ?

"Yours, truly,

A. LINCOLN.

"MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN."

Which plain, practical questions were never directly answered.

This army being without any organization into Army Corps, the President, on the 8th of March, as a movement was about to be made toward Manassas, issued a peremptory order to the Commanding General to attend forthwith to such organization, naming the Corps and their Commanders, according to seniority of rank.

On the same day, the President, who had, against his own judgment, yielded the plan for an advance upon Richmond which should at the same time cover Washington, wise through experience, issued the following :

"*Executive Mansion, Washington, March 8th, 1862.*

"ORDERED. That no change of the base of operations of the Army of the Potomac shall be made without leaving in and about Washington such a force as, in the opinion of the General-in-chief and the commanders of Army Corps, shall leave said city entirely secure.

"That no more than two Army Corps (about fifty thousand troops) of said Army of the Potomac shall be moved *en route* or a new base of operations until the navigation of the Potomac, from Washington to the Chesapeake Bay, shall be freed from the enemy's batteries, and other obstructions, or until the President shall hereafter give express permission.

"That any movement as aforesaid, *en route* for a new base of operations, which may be ordered by the General-in-chief, and which may be intended to move upon Chesapeake Bay, shall begin to move upon the bay as early as the 18th of

Movement.	Peninsular Campaign.	Results.
-----------	----------------------	----------

March, instant, and the General-in-chief shall be responsible that it moves as early as that day.

“ORDERED, That the Army and Navy coöperate in an immediate effort to capture the enemy’s batteries upon the Potomac between Washington and the Chesapeake Bay.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“L. THOMAS, Adjutant-General.”

Finally—after delays manifold, correspondence voluminous, discussions heated, and patience nearly worn threadbare—commenced that military movement, which has passed into history as the American Peninsular Campaign; by virtue of which, commencing about the middle of March, 1862, a large body of finely disciplined troops—their numbers varying, according to various accounts, from one hundred thousand nine hundred and seventy, to one hundred and twenty-one thousand five hundred men—left Alexandria for Richmond, *via* Yorktown, and succeeded, after sanguinary battles, swamp sickness, severe exposures, and terrible hardships, in returning (how many of them?) to Alexandria *via* Harrison’s Landing, by about the middle of August, 1862.

That campaign was the most disastrous drawback of the war, not merely in the loss of men, nor in the failure to reach the end aimed at, but mainly in its enervating effect upon the supporters of the Government. It was Bull Run over again, only immensely magnified, indefinitely prolonged. Fortune seemed determined never to favor our Eastern braves.

Into the details of that campaign it is needless to enter here. Every schoolboy knows them by heart, so far as they are spread upon the record. Equally idle is it to attempt a criticism upon the campaign in a military point of view. That has been already done to a nauseating extent; yet will, doubtless, continue to be done while the reader lives.

No details, nor military criticism therefore here. But that President Lincoln may fairly be presented in his relations to

this campaign, certain observations must be made. And this is the place to make them.

Conceding to General McClellan all the ability, patriotism, and bravery which have been claimed for him by his warmest admirers, there still remain some unfortunate circumstances connected with him, by reason of which—even though he, personally, were responsible for no single one of them—not all the ability, patriotism, and bravery of a Napoleon, Tell, and Bayard combined, could have secured in his person what this country needed for the rooting out of the great rebellion.

It was unfortunate for him that, at the very outset—when so little was known of him, when he had done so little—sycophantic flatterers should have exalted him at once into a great military chieftain. Peculiarly unfortunate was this, considering that the changeable American people were to pass upon him and his actions—that people, in their relations to their leading men, with their “Hosannas” to-day and their “Crucify him’s” to-morrow. The sequel of “going up like a rocket” is not generally supposed to be particularly agreeable.

It was unfortunate for him that the opinion obtained, in the minds of many, impartial and competent to judge, that, in his case, caution had passed the bounds of prudence and run mad. There are emergencies when every thing must be risked that nothing be lost.

It was unfortunate for him that he was made the especial pet of those individuals who were most clamorous against an Administration which, whatever its short comings, every candid man knew was earnestly intent upon ending the war upon such a basis as could alone, in its judgment, secure permanent peace. If a subordinate general could not agree with his superiors, or content himself with matters purely military, he should have declined to remain in the service.

It was unfortunate for him that his especial friends sought, in print, and public speech, and private conversation, to create the impression that the President did not desire that

he should succeed, owing to a fear that he might prove a formidable competitor at the next Presidential election. Peculiarly unfortunate, when one remembers that this President had, at the outbreak of the war, put at the head of three important military departments three of the most decided of his political opponents—Patterson, Butler, and McClellan—that no man ever occupied the Presidential chair, unless it be its first occupant, who had less selfishness and more disinterestedness in his composition than President Lincoln.

It was unfortunate for him that such desperate efforts were made by his supporters to fasten the responsibility for admitted failures upon other parties. This began at Ball's Bluff, as has already been noted. The Secretary of War was dragged in, as well as the President, in connection with the Peninsular Campaign. As to this last, nothing more to the point can be adduced than the words of a man, whose honesty and truthfulness were known wherever he was known—Abraham Lincoln—in a characteristic speech made by him at a Union meeting in Washington, August 6th, 1862, when the issue of the campaign was certain :

“FELLOW-CITIZENS :—I believe there is no precedent for my appearing before you on this occasion ; but it is also true that there is no precedent for your being here yourselves, and I offer, in justification of myself and of you, that, upon examination, I have found nothing in the Constitution against it. I, however, have an impression that there are younger gentlemen who will entertain you better, and better address your understanding than I will or could, and therefore I propose but to detain you a moment longer.

“I am very little inclined on any occasion to say any thing unless I hope to produce some good by it. The only thing I think of just now not likely to be better said by some one else is a matter in which we have heard some other persons blamed for what I did myself. There has been a very widespread attempt to have a quarrel between General McClellan

The Secretary of War.

Neither Blameable.

and the Secretary of War. Now, I occupy a position that enables me to observe, that at least these two gentlemen are not nearly so deep in the quarrel as some pretending to be their friends. General McClellan's attitude is such that, in the very selfishness of his nature, he cannot but wish to be successful, and I hope he will—and the Secretary of War is in precisely the same situation. If the military commanders in the field cannot be successful, not only the Secretary of War, but myself, for the time being the master of them both, can not be but failures. I know that General McClellan wishes to be successful, and I know he does not wish it any more than the Secretary of War for him, and both of them together no more than I wish it. Sometimes we have a dispute about how many men General McClellan has had, and those who would disparage him say that he has had a very large number, and those who would disparage the Secretary of War insist that General McClellan has had a very small number. The basis for this is, there is always a wide difference, and on this occasion perhaps a wider one, between the grand total on McClellan's rolls and the men actually fit for duty; and those who would disparage him talk of the grand total on paper, and those who would disparage the Secretary of War talk of those at present fit for duty. General McClellan has sometimes asked for things that the Secretary of War did not give him. General McClellan is not to blame for asking what he wanted and needed, and the Secretary of War is not to blame for not giving when he had none to give. And I say here, as far as I know, the Secretary of War has withheld no one thing at any time in my power to give him. I have no accusation against him. I believe he is a brave and able man, and I stand here, as justice requires me to do, to take upon myself what has been charged on the Secretary of War, as withholding from him. I have talked longer than I expected to, and now I avail myself of my privilege of saying no more."

It was unfortunate for him that the precedents were so numerous in American history for making a successful military man President. This must have embarrassed him no little, and tempted him into much of that correspondence which otherwise he would have avoided. Had it not been for these fatal precedents, he, assuredly, would not have leisurely seated himself at Harrison's Landing to write to the President a lengthy homily on affairs of State at a moment when it was doubtful whether he would long have an army of which he could be General in command.

Finally, it was unfortunate for him that he had not, when learning to command, learned also to obey. This would have spared himself and the country and the cause several entirely superfluous inflictions.

Whoever would form a correct estimate of President Lincoln's connection with the Peninsular campaign and its commander, must bear these facts in mind. Aside from all considerations of a purely military nature, they are indispensable in reaching an unbiassed decision.

What dogged the heels of this unfortunate campaign must be briefly told. Vigorous orders from Pope, "headquarters in the saddle," turned into most melancholy bombast by his failure, occasioned either by want of brains or willful lack of coöperation; a rebel invasion of Maryland; the battle of South Mountain gained under McClellan; Antietam, not the victory it might have been, for which a ream of reasons were given; the withdrawal of the rebels; Government hard at work urging McClellan to follow; supersedure of the latter by the President, who survived his cabinet in clinging to him; appointment of Burnside, much against his wishes; another defeat at Fredericksburg; and the Army of the Potomac in winter-quarters again.

Such is the summary in the East for A. D. 1862.

In the West, the year closed with the opening of the battle of Murfreesboro, and Vicksburg still held out against all our attempts to take it.

CHAPTER XIII.

FREEDOM TO MILLIONS.

Tribune Editorial—Letter to Mr. Greeley—Announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation—Suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* in certain cases—Order for Observance of the Sabbath—The Emancipation Proclamation.

AN editorial article having appeared in the *New York Tribune*, in the month of August, 1862, in the form of a letter addressed to the President, severely criticising his action relative to the question of slavery—a letter written in ignorance of the fact that a definite policy had already been matured, which would be announced at a suitable moment—Mr. Lincoln responded as follows :

“*Executive Mansion, Washington, Aug. 22, 1862.*

HON. HORACE GREELEY—*Dear Sir* : I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the *New York Tribune*. If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them. If there be in it any inference which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend, whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

“As to the policy I ‘seem to be pursuing,’ as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

“I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the National authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be ‘the Union as it was.’ If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *save* Slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time *destroy* Slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this

The Union to be Saved.

Emancipation Indicated.

struggle *is* to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or destroy Slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing *all* the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about Slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my view of *official* duty, and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed *personal* wish that all men, every where, could be free.

“Yours, A. LINCOLN.”

What that policy was, every manly heart learned with delight when the following Proclamation appeared, the most important state-paper ever penned by any American President:

“I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy thereof, do hereby proclaim and declare, that hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States and the people thereof, in those States in which that relation is, or may be, suspended or disturbed; that it is my purpose, upon the next meeting of Congress, to again recommend the adoption of a practical measure tendering pecuniary aid to the free acceptance or rejection of all the Slave States, so-called, the people whereof may not then be in rebellion against the United States, and which States may then have voluntarily adopted, or thereafter may voluntarily adopt, the immediate or gradual abolishment of slavery within their

respective limits, and that the effort to colonize persons of African descent, with their consent, upon the continent or elsewhere, with the previously obtained consent of the government existing there, will be continued ; that on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or any designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, SHALL BE THEN, THENCEFORWARD AND FOREVER, FREE, and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom ; that the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States, and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall be in rebellion against the United States ; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto, at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof have not been in rebellion against the United States.

“That attention is hereby called to an act of Congress, entitled, ‘An act to make an additional article of war,’ approved March 13, 1862, and which act is in the words and figures following :

“*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That hereafter the following shall be promulgated as an additional Article of War for the government of the Army of the United States, and shall be observed and obeyed as such.*

“*Article —. All officers or persons of the military or*

naval service of the United States, are prohibited from employing any of the forces under their respective commands for the purpose of returning fugitives from service or labor who may have escaped from any persons to whom such service or labor is claimed to be due ; and any officer who shall be found guilty by a court-martial of violating this article, shall be dismissed from the service.

“*Section 2.* And be it further enacted, That this act shall take effect from and after its passage.’

“Also to the ninth and tenth sections of an act entitled, ‘An act to suppress insurrection, to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate property of rebels, and for other purposes,’ approved July 17, 1862, and which sections are in the words and figures following :

“*Section 9.* And be it further enacted, That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the government of the United States, or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army ; and all slaves captured from such persons or deserted by them, and coming under the control of the government of the United States, and all slaves of such persons found on (or being within) any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States, shall be deemed captives of war, and shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves.

“*Section 10.* And be it further enacted, That no slave escaping into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any of the States, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime, or some offence against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitive shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of such fugitive is alleged to be due, is his lawful owner, and has not been in arms against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid and

Compensation to Loyal Owners.

Hindering Enlistments.

comfort thereto; and no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretence whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the service or labor of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant, on pain of being dismissed from the service.

“And I do hereby enjoin upon, and order all persons engaged in the military and naval service of the United States to observe, obey and enforce within their respective spheres of service, the act and sections above recited.

“And the executive will in due time recommend that all citizens of the United States who shall have remained loyal thereto throughout the rebellion, shall (upon the restoration of the constitutional relation between the United States and their respective States and people, if the relation shall have been suspended or disturbed) be compensated for all losses by acts of the United States, including the loss of slaves.

“In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

“Done at the City of Washington, this twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

“By the President :

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.”

This herald of freedom to millions was, of course, intensely disliked by those who omitted no opportunity to cavil at the Administration. As efforts were making—not entirely without success—to embarrass the Government in securing the necessary reinforcements for the army, and certain lewd fellows of the baser sort holding themselves in readiness to take advantage of the bitter prejudices existing in the minds of a portion of the people against the negroes among us, the following proclamation was issued two days later, that no

*Habeas Corpus Suspended.*Popular Opinion.

one might plead ignorance of results, if such treasonable practices should be persisted in :

“ WHEREAS, It has become necessary to call into service, not only volunteers, but also portions of the militia of the States by draft, in order to suppress the insurrection existing in the United States, and disloyal persons are not adequately restrained by the ordinary processes of law from hindering this measure, and from giving aid and comfort in various ways to the insurrection :

“ Now, therefore, be it ordered :

“ *First.* That during the existing insurrection, and as a necessary measure for suppressing the same, all rebels and insurgents, their aiders and abettors, within the United States, and all persons discouraging volunteer enlistments, resisting militia drafts, or guilty of any disloyal practice affording aid and comfort to the rebels against the authority of the United States, shall be subject to martial law, and liable to trial and punishment by courts-martial or military commission.

“ *Third.* That the writ of *habeas corpus* is suspended in respect to all persons arrested, or who are now, or hereafter during the rebellion shall be imprisoned in any fort, camp, arsenal, military prison, or other place of confinement, by any military authority or by the sentence of any court-martial or military commission.

“ In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

“ Done at the City of Washington, this twenty-fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

“ By the President :

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“ WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.”

It would be paying but a poor compliment to the sagacity which prompted this proclamation, if one were not obliged to

say that it was exceedingly distasteful to many. Truth, however, compels us to add that the evils aimed at ceased, to a very great extent, shortly after its appearance.

The following order, issued November 16th, 1862, is but one among the many evidences of that deep and earnest reverence for Christianity which formed a noticeable feature, not only in most of Mr. Lincoln's official papers, but also in the character of the man :

"The President, Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy, desires and enjoins the orderly observance of the Sabbath, by the officers and men in the military and naval service. The importance, for man and beast, of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of a Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine will, demand that Sunday labor in the army and navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity.

"The discipline and character of the National forces should not suffer, nor the cause they defend be imperiled, by the profanation of the day or name of the Most High. 'At this time of public distress,' adopting the words of Washington in 1776, 'men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country, without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality.' The first general order issued by the Father of his Country, after the Declaration of Independence, indicates the spirit in which our institutions were founded and should ever be defended : 'The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country.'

ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

On the 1st day of January, 1863, appeared that proclamation which was to supplement that of September 22d, 1862, crowning with complete fullness that great work and giving it health and being :

somewhere ; things may be done wrong, which the officers of Government do all they can to prevent mistakes.

“But I beg of you, as citizens of this great Republic, not to let your minds be carried off from the great work we have before us. This struggle is too large for you to be diverted from it by any small matter. When you return to your homes, rise up to the height of a generation of men, worthy of a free government, and we will carry out the great work we have commenced. I return you my sincere thanks, soldiers, for the honor you have done me this afternoon.”

And again, on the 22d of August, under similar circumstances :

“SOLDIERS :—I suppose you are going home to see your families and friends. For the services you have done in this great struggle in which we are engaged, I present you sincere thanks for myself and the country.

“I almost always feel inclined, when I say any thing to soldiers, to impress upon them, in a few brief remarks, the importance of success in this contest. It is not merely for to-day, but for all time to come, that we should perpetuate for our children’s children that great and free Government which we have enjoyed all our lives. I beg you to remember this, not merely for my sake, but for yours. I happen temporarily to occupy this big White House. I am a living witness that any one of your children may look to come here as my father’s child has.

“It is in order that each one of you may have, through this free Government which we have enjoyed, an open field and a fair chance for your industry, enterprise, and intelligence ; that you may all have equal privileges in the race of life, with all its desirable human aspirations ; it is for this that the struggle should be maintained, that we may not lose our birthrights—not only for one, but for two or three years.

President's Letter.

"To Whom It May Concern."

Democratic Convention.

The nation is worth fighting for, to secure such an unquestionable jewel."

During the excitement accompanying the rebel attempts upon the National Capitol, during the month of July, heretofore noticed, representations were made to the President that certain individuals, professing to represent the rebel leaders, were in Canada, anxious to enter into negotiations, with a view to the restoration of peace.

In response to this suggestion, Mr. Lincoln issued the following paper, which was very unsatisfactory to those who affected to believe that peace could be secured upon any basis short of the recognition of the Southern Confederacy, unless the rebels in arms were thoroughly defeated, dated, Executive Mansion, Washington, July 18, 1864.

"TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.—Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive Government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearers thereof shall have safe conduct both ways.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

This ended that attempt to divide the supporters of the Administration.

On the 29th of August, 1864, assembled at Chicago the National Convention of the Democratic party. This had been preceded by a "Mass Peace Convention," at Syracuse, on the 18th of August, at which it had been resolved, among other things, that it was the duty of the Chicago Convention to give expression to a beneficent sentiment of peace and to declare as the purpose of the Democratic party, if it should recover power, to cause the desolating war to cease by the calling of a National Convention, in which all the States

Democratic National Convention.

Two Factions.

Gen. McClellan Nominated.

should be represented in their sovereign capacity; and that, to that end, an immediate armistice should be declared of sufficient duration to give the States and the people ample time and opportunity to deliberate upon and finally conclude a form of Union.

There were two factions represented at Chicago: one, unqualifiedly in favor of peace at any price, upon any terms, with any concessions; the other, disposed to take every possible advantage of the mistakes of the Administration, but not possessed of effrontery sufficient to pronounce boldly for a cessation of hostilities in any and every event.

Thus embarrassed, what was left of the still great Democratic party—that party which had swayed the country for so many years, and whose disruption in 1860 was the immediate occasion of the war that ensued—determined to do what it never before, in all its history, had ventured upon. It essayed to ride, at one and the same time, two horses going in diametrically opposite directions.

To conciliate whatever feeling in favor of a prosecution of the war there might be in their ranks, without at the same time going too far in that direction, and to secure as many soldiers' votes as possible, they put in nomination for the Presidency, Gen. McClellan. To neutralize this apparent tendency toward war, they associated the General with George H. Pendleton, of Ohio, as a candidate for the Vice-Presidency—a man, who, during his entire Congressional career as member of the National House of Representatives, had avowed himself and voted as a Peace-at-any-price individual, from the very outset.

The bane and antidote having thus been blended, as only political chemists would have attempted, the candidates were placed upon a platform, the second resolution of which was as follows:

“Resolved, That this Convention does explicitly declare, as

Democratic National Convention. The War a Failure. McClellan's Acceptance.

the sense of the American people, that, after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretence of a military necessity or war power higher than the Constitution, the Constitution itself has been disregarded in every part, and public liberty and private right alike trodden down, and the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired, justice, humanity, liberty, and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to an ultimate Convention of all the States, or other peaceable means, to the end that at the earliest practicable moment peace may be restored on the basis of the Federal Union of the States."

This accomplished, the Convention adjourned, having provided for its indefinite existence by empowering its chairman to reconvene it, whenever, in his judgment, it should be thought necessary.

McClellan accepted the nomination, happy to know that when it was made, the record of his public life was kept in view. In his letter of acceptance, he talked all around the peace proposition, ignored the idea of a cessation of hostilities, and went for the whole Union. The document, though sufficiently general and indefinite to answer the purpose, failed to satisfy the ultra-peace men of his party.

Thus, in the midst of a civil war, unparalleled in the world's history, the extraordinary spectacle was presented of a great people entering with earnestness upon a political campaign, one of whose issues—indeed, the main one—was as to the continuance of that war, with all its hardships and burdens.

Just after the adjournment of the Chicago Convention, Sherman's occupation of Atlanta and the capture of the forts in the harbor of Mobile, were announced, seeming to intimate that the war had not been, up to that time, wholly a failure. The thanks of the Nation were tendered by the President to

Capture of Atlanta.

Thanksgiving Proclamation.

Negroes as Soldiers.

the officers and men connected with these operations, national salutes ordered, and the following proclamation issued, dated September 3d, 1864.

“The signal success that Divine Providence has recently vouchsafed to the operations of the United States fleet and army in the harbor of Mobile, and the reduction of Fort Powell, Fort Gaines, and Fort Morgan, and the glorious achievements of the army under Major-General Sherman, in the State of Georgia, resulting in the capture of the city of Atlanta, call for devout acknowledgment of the Supreme Being in whose hands are the destinies of nations.

“It is therefore requested that on next Sunday, in all places of worship in the United States, thanksgiving be offered to Him for His mercy in preserving our national existence against the insurgent rebels who have been waging a cruel war against the Government of the United States for its overthrow, and also that prayer be made for Divine protection to our brave soldiers and their leaders in the field, who have so often and so gallantly perilled their lives in battling with the enemy, and for blessing and comfort from the Father of Mercies to the sick, wounded, and prisoners, and to the orphans and widows of those who have fallen in the service of their country, and that He will continue to uphold the Government of the United States against all the efforts of public enemies and secret foes.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

Mr. Lincoln's views relative to the employment of negroes as soldiers were again and fully expressed about this time in a conversation with leading gentlemen from the West. On that occasion he said :

“The slightest knowledge of arithmetic will prove to any man that the rebel armies cannot be destroyed by Democratic strategy. It would sacrifice all the white men of the North to do it. There are now in the service of the United States

nearly two hundred thousand able-bodied colored men, most of them under arms, defending and acquiring Union territory. The Democratic strategy demands that these forces be disbanded, and that the masters be conciliated by restoring them to slavery. The black men, who now assist Union prisoners to escape, are to be converted into our enemies, in the vain hope of gaining the good-will of their masters. We shall have to fight two nations instead of one.

“You can not conciliate the South, if you guarantee to them ultimate success; and the experience of the present war proves their success is inevitable, if you fling the compulsory labor of millions of black men into their side of the scale. Will you give our enemies such military advantages as insure success, and then depend upon coaxing, flattery, and concession to get them back into the Union? Abandon all the forts now garrisoned by black men, take two hundred thousand men from our side and put them in the battle-field or corn-field against us, and we would be compelled to abandon the war in three weeks.

“We have to hold territory in inclement and sickly places; where are the Democrats to do this? It was a free fight; and the field was open to the War Democrats to put down this rebellion by fighting against both master and slave, long before the present policy was inaugurated.

“There have been men base enough to propose to me to return to slavery our black warriors of Port Hudson and Olustec, and thus win the respect of the masters they fought. Should I do so, I should deserve to be damned in time and eternity. Come what will, I will keep my faith with friend and foe. My enemies pretend I am now carrying on this war for the sole purpose of abolition. So long as I am President, it shall be carried on for the sole purpose of restoring the Union. But no human power can subdue this rebellion without the use of the Emancipation policy, and every

What Freedom gives us.

How it weakens the Rebellion.

Speech.

other policy calculated to weaken the moral and physical forces of the rebellion.

“Freedom has given us two hundred thousand men raised on Southern soil. It will give us more yet. Just so much it has subtracted from the enemy; and, instead of checking the South, there are now evidences of a fraternal feeling growing up between our men and the rank and file of the rebel soldiers. Let my enemies prove to the country that the destruction of slavery is not necessary to the restoration of the Union. I will abide the issue.”

On the 19th of October, the President having been serenaded by the loyal Marylanders of the District of Columbia, said :

“I am notified that this is a compliment paid me by the loyal Marylanders resident in this district. I infer that the adoption of the new Constitution for the State furnishes the occasion, and that in your view the extirpation of slavery constitutes the chief merit of the new Constitution.

“Most heartily do I congratulate you, and Maryland, and the Nation, and the world upon the event. I regret that it did not occur two years sooner, which, I am sure, would have saved to the nation more money than would have met all the private loss incident to the measure; but it has come at last, and I sincerely hope its friends may fully realize all their anticipations of good from it, and that its opponents may, by its effects, be agreeably and profitably disappointed.

“A word upon another subject: Something said by the Secretary of State, in his recent speech at Auburn, has been construed by some into a threat that, if I shall be beaten at the election, I will between then and the end of my constitutional term do what I may be able to ruin the Government. Others regard the fact that the Chicago Convention adjourned, not *sine die*, but to meet again, if called to do so by a particular individual, as the ultimatum of a purpose that, if the

nominee shall be elected, he will at once seize control of the Government.

“I hope the good people will permit themselves to suffer no uneasiness on either point. I am struggling to maintain the Government, not to overthrow it. I therefore say that, if I shall live, I shall remain President until the fourth of March. And whoever shall be constitutionally elected, therefore, in November, shall be duly installed as President on the fourth of March; and that, in the interval, I shall do my utmost that whoever is to hold the helm for the next voyage, shall start with the best possible chance to save the ship.

“This is due to our people, both on principle and under the Constitution. Their will, constitutionally expressed, is the ultimate law for all. If they should deliberately resolve to have immediate peace, even at the loss of their country and their liberties, I know not the power or the right to resist them. It is their own business, and they must do as they please with their own.

“I believe, however, that they are all resolved to preserve their country and their liberty; and in this, in office or out of it, I am resolved to stand by them. I may add, that in this purpose—to save the country and its liberties—no class of people seem so nearly unanimous as the soldiers in the field and the seamen afloat. Do they not have the hardest of it? Who shall quail, when they do not? God bless the soldiers and seamen and all their brave commanders!”

CHAPTER XXII.

RE-ELECTED.

Presidential Campaign of 1864—Fremont's Withdrawal—Wade and Davis —Peace and War Democrats—Rebel Sympathizers—October Election—Result of Presidential Election—Speech to Pennsylvanians—Speech at a Serenade—Letter to a Soldier's Mother—Opening of Congress—Last Annual Message.

THE Presidential campaign of 1864, was, in several of its aspects, an anomaly. The amount of low blackguard and slang dealt out against the Administration, was perhaps to have been expected in a land where personal abuse seems to have become regarded as so vital an accompaniment of a National Election, that its absence in any exciting canvass would give rise to grave fears that positive Constitutional requirements had been disregarded.

Though freedom, in such instances, far too often is wrested into the vilest abuse, it was in truth passing strange that an Administration should be so violently assailed by its opponents as despotic and tyrannical, when the very fact that such strictures and comments were passed upon it, without let or hindrance, by word of mouth and on the printed page, afforded a proof that the despotism, if such there were, was either too mild or too weak to enforce even a decent treatment of itself and its acts. It is safe to say, that, within the limits of that section with which we were under any circumstances to establish harmonious and peaceful relations, according to the requirements of the opposition, not one speech in a hundred, not one editorial in a thousand, would have been permitted under precisely similar circumstances.

General Fremont withdrew his name shortly after the Chicago nominations, that he might not distract and divide

Fremont's Withdrawal.

Wade and Davis.

The Opposition.

the friends of the Union. In his letter of withdrawal he said :

“The policy of the Democratic party signifies either separation, or reestablishment, with slavery. The Chicago platform is simply separation. General McClellan's letter of acceptance, is reestablishment with slavery. . . . The Republican candidate, on the contrary, is pledged to the reestablishment of Union without slavery.”

Senator Wade and Henry Winter Davis, who had joined in a manifesto to the people, bitterly denunciatory of the President's course in issuing his reconstruction proclamation, entered manfully into the canvass in behalf of the Baltimore nominees. The ranks of the supporters of the Government closed steadily up, and pressed on to a success, of which they could not, with their faith in manhood and republican principles, suffer themselves to doubt.

The Opposition were not entirely in accord. It was a delicate position in which the full-blooded Peace Democrat found himself, obliged as he was to endorse a man whose only claim for the nomination was the reputation which he had made as a prominent General engaged in prosecuting an “unnatural, unholy war.” Nor did it afford much alleviation to his distress to remember that this candidate had been loudly assailed in the Convention as the first mover in the matter of arbitrary arrests, against which a sturdy outcry had long been raised by himself and friends. It was unpleasant, moreover, not to be able to forget that the same candidate had been the first to suggest a draft—or “conscription,” as your true peace man would call it: that measure so full of horrors, against which unconstitutional act such an amount of indignation had been expended.

Nor was the situation of the War Democrat, if he were indeed honestly and sincerely such, much better. He could not shut his eyes to the fact, that his candidate's military record, whatever else it might have established, did not evince

Campaign of 1864.

The Opposition.

The State Elections.

very remarkable vigor and celerity in his movements, as compared with other Generals then and since prominently before the public. Even had he blundered energetically, in that there would have been some consolation. The thought, not unpleasant to the Pendletonian, of the possibility of the General's death during his term of office, stirred up certain other thoughts which he would rather have avoided.

However, it must be said, that, taken as a whole, the Opposition came up to the work more vigorously than might have been supposed, and carried on their campaign in as blustering and defiant a style as if victory were sure to perch upon their banners. There was the usual amount of cheap enthusiasm, valiant betting, and an unusual amount, many thought, of cheating—at least, the results of investigations at Baltimore and Washington, conducted by a military tribunal, to a casual observer appeared to squint in that direction.

Richmond papers were, for a marvel, quite unanimous in the desire that Mr. Lincoln should not be reëlected. The rebel Vice-President declared that the Chicago movement was "the only ray of light which had come from the North during the war." European sympathizers with the rebellion, likewise, were opposed to Mr. Lincoln's reëlection, and their organs on the Continent and in the provinces did their best to abuse him shockingly.

The State elections in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana, occurring in October, created much consternation in the opposition ranks—that in the latter State particularly, which had been set down positively as upon their side, but insisted, upon that occasion, in common with the first two in pronouncing unequivocally in favor of the Administration candidates.

The result could no longer be doubtful. Yet the most of the supporters of McClellan kept up their talk, whatever their thoughts may have been.

No opportunity for talk, even, was afforded when the results of the election of November 8th became known.

 Presidential Election.

The Result.

Speech of Mr. Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson—whom an opposition journal, with rarest refinement and graceful courtesy, concentrating all its malignity into the intensest sentence possible, had characterized as “a rail-splitting buffoon and a boorish tailor, both from the backwoods, both growing up in uncouth ignorance”—these men of the people carried every loyal State, except Kentucky, New Jersey, and Delaware, the vote of soldiers in service having been almost universally given to them.

Of the four million, thirty-four thousand, seven hundred and eighty-nine votes cast, Mr. Lincoln received, according to official returns, two million, two hundred and twenty-three thousand, and thirty-five; a majority on the aggregate popular vote, of four hundred and eleven thousand, two hundred and eighty-one.

The President elect by a plurality in 1860, he was reëlected in 1864 by a majority decisive and unmistakable.

Having been serenaded early in the morning following his reëlection, by Pennsylvanians then in Washington, he thus gave utterance to his feelings :

“FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS :—Even before I had been informed by you that this compliment was paid me by loyal citizens of Pennsylvania friendly to me, I had inferred that you were of that portion of my countrymen who think that the best interests of the nation are to be subserved by the support of the present administration. I do not pretend to say that you, who think so, embrace all the patriotism and loyalty of the country; but I do believe, and I trust without personal interest, that the welfare of the country does require that such support and indorsement be given. I earnestly believe that the consequences of this day’s work, if it be as you assume, and as now seems probable, will be to the lasting advantage if not to the very salvation of the country. I cannot, at this hour, say what has been the

Presidential Election.

Speech to Pennsylvanians.

Speech at a Serenade.

result of the election, but whatever it may be, I have no desire to modify this opinion: that all who have labored to-day in behalf of the Union organization, have wrought for the best interest of their country and the world, not only for the present, but for all future ages. I am thankful to God for this approval of the people; but while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. I do not impugn the motives of any one opposed to me. It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one, but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity."

When the result was definitely known, at a serenade given in his honor on the night of November 10th, by the various Lincoln and Johnson Clubs of the District, he said:

"It has long been a grave question whether any Government, not too strong for the liberties of its people, can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies. On this point the present rebellion brought our Government to a severe test, and a Presidential election occurring in a regular course during the rebellion, added not a little to the strain.

"If the loyal people united were put to the utmost of their strength by the rebellion, must they not fail when divided and partially paralyzed by a political war among themselves? But the election was a necessity—we can not have free government without elections; and if the rebellion could force us to forego or postpone a national election, it must fairly claim to have already conquered and ruined us. The strife of the election is but human nature practically applied to the facts of the case. What has occurred in this case must ever recur in similar cases. Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this, we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and

Speech at a Serenade.

Gold good, but Men better.

His Faith in the Country.

as wise, as bad and as good. Let us, therefore, study the incidents of this, as philosophy to learn wisdom from, and none of them as wrongs to be revenged.

“But the election, along with its incidental and undesirable strife, has done good too. It has demonstrated that a people’s government can sustain a national election in the midst of a great civil war. Until now it has not been known to the world that this was a possibility. It shows also how sound and how strong we still are. It shows that, even among the candidates of the same party, he who is most devoted to the Union, and most opposed to treason, can receive most of the people’s votes. It shows also, to the extent yet known, that we have more men now than we had when the war began. Gold is good in its place; but living, brave, and patriotic men are better than gold.

“But the rebellion continues; and now that the election is over, may not all having a common interest, reunite in a common effort to save our common country? For my own part, I have striven and shall strive to avoid placing any obstacle in the way. So long as I have been here I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man’s bosom. While I am duly sensible to the high compliment of a reëlection, and duly grateful, as I trust, to Almighty God for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion, as I think, for their good, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be disappointed by the result.

“May I ask those who have not differed with me to join with me in this same spirit toward those who have? And now let me close by asking three hearty cheers for our brave soldiers and seamen and their gallant and skilful commanders.”

As indicative of Mr. Lincoln’s warmth and tenderness of heart the following letter will be read with interest. It was addressed to a poor widow, in Boston, whose sixth son, then

Letter to a Widow.

Five Sons for her Country.

Last Annual Message.

recently wounded, was lying in a hospital, and bears date November 21st, 1864.

“DEAR MADAM:—I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts, that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine, which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming; but I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours, to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of Freedom.

“Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.”

The Thirty-eighth Congress commenced its second session on the 5th of December, 1864. On the following day Mr. Lincoln transmitted what was to be his last annual message:

“FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:—Again the blessings of health and abundant harvests claim our profoundest gratitude to Almighty God.

“The condition of our foreign affairs is reasonably satisfactory.

“Mexico continues to be a theatre of civil war. While our political relations with that country have undergone no change, we have at the same time strictly maintained neutrality between the belligerents.

“At the request of the States of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, a competent engineer has been authorized to make a survey of the river San Juan and the port of San Juan. It is a source of much satisfaction that the difficulties, which for a

moment excited some political apprehension, and caused a closing of the inter-oceanic transit route, have been amicably adjusted, and that there is a good prospect that the route will soon be re-opened with an increase of capacity and adaptation.

“We could not exaggerate either the commercial or the political importance of that great improvement. It would be doing injustice to an important South American State not to acknowledge the directness, frankness, and cordiality with which the United States of Columbia has entered into intimate relation with this Government. A Claim Convention has been constituted to complete the unfinished work of the one which closed its session in 1861.

“The new liberal Constitution of Venezuela having gone into effect with the universal acquiescence of the people, the Government under it has been recognized, and diplomatic intercourse with it has been opened in a cordial and friendly spirit.

“The long-deferred Avis Island claim has been satisfactorily paid and discharged. Mutual payments have been made of the claims awarded by the late Joint Commission for the settlement of claims between the United States and Peru. An earnest and candid friendship continues to exist between the two countries; and such efforts as were in my power have been used to prevent misunderstanding, and avert a threatened war between Peru and Spain.

“Our relations are of the most friendly nature with Chili, the Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Paraguay, San Salvador, and Hayti. During the past year, no differences of any kind have arisen with any of these Republics. And, on the other hand, their sympathies with the United States are constantly expressed with cordiality and earnestness.

“The claims arising from the seizure of the cargo of the brig Macedonian, in 1821, have been paid in full by the Government of Chili.

its assistance to make good their committal. Now, if we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in fact, say to the white man, 'You are worthless, or worse; we will neither help you nor be helped by you.' To the blacks we say, 'This cup of liberty which your old masters there hold to your lips we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined way when, where, and how.' If this course, by discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain the new Government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true.

"We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the twelve thousand to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it, to a complete success. The colored man, too, in seeing all united for him, is inspired with vigilance, and energy, and daring to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps toward it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new Government of Louisiana is only what it should be, as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg, than by smashing it. [Laughter.]

"Again, if we reject Louisiana, we also reject our vote in favor of the proposed amendment to the National Constitution. To meet this proposition, it has been argued that no more than three-fourths of those States which have not attempted secession are necessary to validly ratify the amendment. I do not commit myself against this, further than to say that such a ratification would be questionable, and sure to be persistently questioned, while a ratification by three-

Last Public Speech.

The Louisiana Government.

Proclamation.

fourths of all the States would be unquestioned and unquestionable.

“I repeat the question. Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State Government? What has been said of Louisiana will apply severally to other States; yet so great peculiarities pertain to each State, and such important and sudden changes occur in the same State, and withal so new and unprecedented is the whole case, that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed. As to details and collaterals, such an exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible.

“In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper.”

On the 11th of April, also, appeared the following proclamation :

“WHEREAS, By my proclamation of the 19th and 27th days of April, 1861, the ports of the United States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas were declared to be subject to blockade, but whereas the said blockade has, in consequence of actual military occupation by this Government, since then been conditionally set aside or released in respect to the ports of Norfolk and Alexandria, in the State of Virginia, Beaufort, in the State of North Carolina, Port Royal, in the State of South Carolina, Pensacola and Fernandina, in the State of Florida, and New Orleans, in the State of Louisiana; and whereas, by the 4th section of the act of Congress approved on the 13th of July, 1861, entitled ‘an act further to provide for the collection of duties on imports, and for other

Proclamation closing certain Ports.

Proclamation on Maritime Rights.

purposes,' the President, for the reasons therein set forth, is authorized to close certain ports of entry.

"Now, therefore, be it known that I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, do hereby proclaim that the ports of Richmond, Tappahannock, Cherry Stone, Yorktown, and Petersburg, in Virginia; of Camden, Elizabeth City, Edenton, Plymouth, Washington, Newbern, Ocracoke, and Wilmington, in North Carolina; of Charleston, Georgetown, and Beaufort, in South Carolina; of Savannah, St. Marys, Brunswick, and Darien, in Georgia; of Mobile, in Alabama; of Pearl river, Shieldsboro', Natchez, and Vicksburg, in Mississippi; of St. Augustine, Key West, St. Marks, Port Leon, St. Johns, Jacksonville, and Apalachicola, in Florida; of Teche and Franklin, in Louisiana; of Galveston, La Salle, Brazos de Santiago, Point Isabel, and Brownsville, in Texas, are hereby closed, and all rights of importation, warehousing, and other privileges shall, in respect to the ports aforesaid, cease until they shall again have been opened by order of the President; and if, while said ports are so closed, any ship or vessel from beyond the United States, or having on board any articles subject to duties, shall attempt to enter any such port, the same, together with its tackle, apparel, furniture, and cargo, shall be forfeited to the United States.

"In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

"Done at the City of Washington this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-ninth.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State."

And on the same day the following :

"WHEREAS, for some time past vessels-of-war of the United

Proclamation on Maritime Rights.

Equality claimed with all Nations.

States have been refused in certain foreign ports privileges and immunities to which they were entitled by treaty, public law, or the comity of nations, at the same time that vessels-of-war of the country wherein the said privileges and immunities have been withheld have enjoyed them fully and uninterruptedly in ports of the United States, which condition of things has not always been forcibly resisted by the United States, although, on the other hand, they have not at any time failed to protest against and declare their dissatisfaction with the same. In the view of the United States no condition any longer exists which can be claimed to justify the denial to them by any one of said nations of customary naval rights, such as has heretofore been so unnecessarily persisted in—

“Now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, do hereby make known that if after a reasonable time shall have elapsed for intelligence of this proclamation to have reached any foreign country in whose ports the said privileges and immunities shall have been refused as aforesaid, they shall continue to be so refused, then and thenceforth the same privileges and immunities shall be refused to the vessels-of-war of that country in the ports of the United States; and this refusal shall continue until war-vessels of the United States shall have been placed upon an entire equality in the foreign ports aforesaid with vessels of other countries. *The United States, whatever claim or pretence may have existed heretofore, are now at least entitled to claim and concede an entire and friendly equality of rights and hospitalities with all maritime nations.*

“In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

“Done at the city of Washington this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred

Supplementary Proclamation.

Key West.

Official Bulletin.

and sixty-five, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-ninth.

“By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.”

And, on the twelfth April, the following supplementary proclamation :

“WHEREAS, By my proclamation of this date the port of Key West, in the State of Florida, was inadvertently included among those which are not open to commerce :

“Now, therefore, be it known that I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, do hereby declare and make known that the said port of Key West is and shall remain open to foreign and domestic commerce, upon the same conditions by which that commerce has hitherto been governed.

“In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

“Done at the City of Washington this eleventh day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the eighty-ninth.

“By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“WM. H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.”

The light in which the administration regarded the position of affairs can best be judged from the following official bulletin from the War Department, bearing date April thirteenth, 1865 :

“This Department, after mature consideration and consultation with the Lieutenant-General upon the results of the recent campaigns, has come to the following determination, which will be carried into effect by appropriate orders, to be immediately issued :

Official Bulletin.

Drafting and Recruiting Stopped.

Expenses Curtailed.

“First. To stop all drafting and recruiting in the loyal States.

“Second. To curtail purchases for arms, ammunition, quartermaster’s and commissary supplies, and reduce the expenses of the military establishment and its several branches.

“Third. To reduce the number of general and staff officers to the actual necessities of the service.

“Fourth. To remove all military restrictions upon trade and commerce, so far as may be consistent with the public safety.

“As soon as these measures can be put in operation, it will be made known by public orders.

“EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.”

The Traitor President, who, on the fifth of April, had issued a proclamation to the effect that he should hold on to Virginia—where was he at this time?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LAST ACT.

Interview with Mr. Colfax—Cabinet Meeting—Incident—Evening Conversation—Possibility of Assassination—Leaves for the Theatre—In the Theatre—Precautions for the Murder—The Pistol Shot—Escape of the Assassin—Death of the President—Pledges Redeemed—Situation of the Country—Effect of the Murder—Obsequies at Washington—Borne Home—Grief of the People—At Rest.

ON the morning of Friday, April fourteenth, 1865, after an interesting conversation with his eldest son, Robert, a captain on General Grant’s staff, relative to the surrender of Lee, with the details of which the son was familiar, the President, hearing that Schuyler Colfax, Speaker of the House of Repre-

Cabinet Meeting Held.

President's Dream.

Interview with Mr. Colfax.

sentatives, was in the Executive Mansion, invited the latter to a chat in the reception-room, and during the following hour the talk turned upon his future policy toward the rebellion—a matter which he was about to submit to his Cabinet.

After an interview with John P. Hale, then recently appointed Minister to Spain, as well as with several Senators and Representatives, a Cabinet meeting was held, at eleven o'clock, General Grant being present, which proved to be one of the most satisfactory and important consultations held since his first inauguration. The future policy of the Administration was harmoniously and unanimously agreed upon, and upon the adjournment of the meeting the Secretary of War remarked that the Government was then stronger than at any period since the commencement of the rebellion.

It was afterwards remembered that at this meeting the President turned to General Grant and asked him if he had heard from General Sherman. General Grant replied that he had not, but was in hourly expectation of receiving dispatches from him, announcing the surrender of Johnston.

"Well," said the President, "you will hear very soon now, and the news will be important."

"Why do you think so?" said the General.

"Because," said Mr. Lincoln, "I had a dream last night, and ever since the war began I have invariably had the same dream before any very important military event has occurred." He then instanced Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg, etc., and said that before each of these events he had had the same dream, and turning to Secretary Welles, said:

"It is in your line, too, Mr. Welles. The dream is that I saw a ship sailing very rapidly, and I am sure that it portends some important national event."

In the afternoon, a long and pleasant conversation was held with eminent citizens from Illinois.

In the evening, during a talk with Messrs. Colfax and Ashman—the latter of whom presided at the Chicago Con-

Possibility of Assassination.

Kindness of Heart.

Messrs. Ashman and Colfax.

vention, in 1860—speaking about his trip to Richmond, when the suggestion was made that there was much uneasiness at the North while he was at what had been the rebel capital, for fear that some traitor might shoot him, Mr. Lincoln portively replied, that he would have been alarmed himself, if any other person had been President and gone there, but that, as for himself, he did not feel in any danger whatever.

This possibility of an assassination had been presented before to the President's mind, but it had not occasioned him a moment's uneasiness. A member of his Cabinet one day said to him, "Mr. Lincoln, you are not sufficiently careful of yourself. There are bad men in Washington. Did it never occur to you that there are rebels among us who are bad enough to attempt your life?" The President stepped to a desk and drew from a pigeon-hole a package of letters. "There," said he, "every one of these contains a threat to assassinate me. I might be nervous, if I were to dwell upon the subject, but I have come to this conclusion: there are opportunities to kill me every day of my life, if there are persons disposed to do it. It is not possible to avoid exposure to such a fate, and I shall not trouble myself about it."

Upon the evening alluded to, while conversing upon a matter of business with Mr. Ashman, he saw that the latter was surprised at a remark which he had made, when, prompted by his well-known desire to avoid any thing offensive, he immediately said, "You did not understand me, Ashman: I did not mean what you inferred, and I will take it all back, and apologize for it." He afterward gave Mr. A. a card, admitting himself and friend for a further conversation early in the morning.

Turning to Mr. Colfax, he said, "You are going with Mrs. Lincoln and me to the theatre, I hope." The President and General Grant had previously accepted an invitation to be present that evening at Ford's Theatre, but the General had

Messrs. Ashman and Colfax.

Goes to the Theatre.

The Assassin's Precautions.

been obliged to leave for the North. Mr. Lincoln did not like to entirely disappoint the audience, as the announcement had been publicly made, and had determined to fulfil his acceptance.

Mr. Colfax, however, declining on account of other engagements, Mr. Lincoln said to him, "Mr. Sumner has the gavel of the Confederate Congress, which he got at Richmond to hand to the Secretary of War. But I insisted then that he must give it to you; and you tell him for me to hand it over." Mr. Ashman alluded to the gavel, still in his possession, which he had used at Chicago; and about half an hour after the time they had intended to leave for the theatre, the President and Mrs. Lincoln rose to depart, the former reluctant and speaking about remaining at home a half hour longer.

At the door he stopped and said, "Colfax, do not forget to tell the people in the mining regions, as you pass through them, what I told you this morning about the development when peace comes, and I will telegraph you at San Francisco." Having shaken hands with both gentlemen and bidden them a pleasant good-bye, the President with his party left for the theatre.

The box occupied by them was on the second tier above the stage, at the right of the audience, the entrance to it being by a door from the adjoining gallery. One, who had planned Mr. Lincoln's assassination with extraordinary precautions against any failure, having effected an entrance by deceiving the guard, found himself in a dark corridor, of which the wall made an acute angle with the door. The assassin had previously gouged a channel from the plaster and placed near by a stout piece of board, which he next inserted between the wall and the panel of the door.

Ingress then being rendered impossible, he next turned toward the entrances to the President's box, two in number, as the box by a sliding partition could, at pleasure, be converted into two. The door at the bottom of the passage was

open ; that nearer the assassin was closed. Both had spring-locks, but their screws had been carefully loosened so as to yield to a slight pressure, if necessary.

Resort was had to the hither door, in which a small hole had been bored, for the purpose of securing a view of the interior of the box, the door first described having first been fastened, and the discovery made that the occupants had taken seats as follows: the President in the arm-chair nearest the audience, Mrs. Lincoln next, then, after a considerable space, a Miss Clara Harris in the corner nearest the stage, and a Major H. R. Rathbone on a lounge along the further wall.

The play was, "Our American Cousin." While all were intent upon its representation, the report of a pistol first announced the presence of the assassin, who uttered the word "Freedom!" and advanced toward the front. The Major having discerned the murderer through the smoke, and grappled with him, the latter dropped his pistol and aimed with a knife at the breast of his antagonist, who caught the blow in the upper part of his left arm, but was unable to detain the desperado, though he immediately seized him again. The villain, however, leaped some twelve feet down upon the open stage, tangling his spur in the draped flag below the box and stumbling in his fall.

Recovering himself immediately, he flourished his dagger, shouted "*Sic semper tyrannis*" and "*The South is avenged,*" retreated successfully through the labyrinth of the theatre—perfectly familiar to him—to his horse in waiting below. Between the deed of blood and the escape there was not the lapse of a minute. The hour was about half-past ten. There was but one pursuer, and he from the audience, but he was outstripped.

The meaning of the pistol-shot was soon ascertained. Mr. Lincoln had been shot in the back of the head, behind the left ear, the ball traversing an oblique line to the right

Death of the President.

Grief of his Family.

Reflections.

ear. He was rendered instantly unconscious, and never knew friends or pain again. Having been conveyed as soon as possible to a house opposite the theatre, he expired there the next morning, April fifteenth, 1865, at twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock, attended by the principal members of his Cabinet and other friends, from all of whom the heart-rending spectacle drew copious tears of sorrow. Mrs. Lincoln and her son Robert were in an adjoining apartment—the former bowed down with anguish, the latter strong enough to sustain and console her. A disconsolate widow and two sons now constituted the entire family. Soon after nine o'clock, the body was removed to the White House under military escort.

Thus ended the earthly career of Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth President of the United States, on the threshold of his fifty-seventh year and second Presidential term.

"Sic semper tyrannis!" And this the justification for the murder of a ruler who had

"——borne his faculties so meek, had been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off."

"The South avenged!" And by the cold-blooded murder of the best friend that repentant rebels ever had—of one who had long withstood the pressing appeals of his warmest personal and political friends for less lenity and more rigor in dealing with traitors.

It was written in the decrees of the Immutable that he should fall by the bullet—not, indeed, on the battle-field, whose sad suggestings he had so often, and so tenderly, lovingly heeded—but in the midst of his family, while seeking relief from the cares of state—and by a murderer's hand!—the first President to meet such a fate—thenceforth our martyr-chief!

But sorrow was tempered with mercy. He did not fall

Sorrow tempered with Mercy.

Inaugural Redeemed.

Flag over Fort Sumter.

until a benignant Providence had permitted him to enjoy a foretaste, at least, of the blessings which he had been instrumental in conferring upon the land he loved so well.

The pledges of his first Inaugural Address had been amply redeemed—those pledges which so many declared impossible of fulfilment, which not a few mocked as beyond human power to accomplish. The power confided to him had been successfully used “to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government.” No United States fort at the time of his fall flaunted treason in the eyes of the land. The day of his murder the old flag had been flung to the breeze from Sumter with ceremonies befitting the joyous occasion, by the very hands that four years before had been compelled to lower it to arrogant traitors; and friends of freedom for man, irrespective of color or race, walked the streets of Charleston—a city of desolation, a skeleton of its former self—jubilant that, since God so willed it, in His own good time, Freedom was National and Slavery but a thing of the past.

When he fell, the Nation, brought by the stern necessities of direful war to the discharge of duties befitting a better manhood, passing by all projects for an emancipation of slaves, which should be merely gradual, not content even that such emancipation had been proclaimed as a measure of military necessity, had spoken in favor of such an amendment of the Constitution as should forever prohibit any claim of property in man. Though the final consummation of that great measure had not been reached when our President was removed, it was given him to feel assured that the end was not distant, was even then close at hand.

When he fell, that body of traitors which had assumed to be a Government had fled, one scarcely knew whither, with whatever of ill-gotten gains their greedy hands could grasp—their main army captive, the residue of their military force on the point of surrendering. From what had been their

The Nation's Sorrow.

Houses Draped.

Minute Guns Fired.

capital, in the mansion appropriated to the special use of the chiefest among the conspirators, he had been permitted to send words of greeting to the nation.

When he fell, treason throughout the land lay gasping, dying.

It needed not that dismal, dreary, mid-April day to intensify the sorrow. As on the wings of lightning the news sped through the land—"the President is Shot"—"is dying"—"is dead"—men knew scarcely how to credit the tale. When the fearful certainty came home to each, strong men bowed themselves and wept—maid and matron joined in the plaint. With no extraneous prompting, with no impulse save that of the heart alone, the common grief took on a common garb. Houses were draped—the flag of our country hung pensive at half-mast—portraits of the loved dead were found on all.

And dreary as was the day when first the tidings swept through the country, patriot hearts were drearier still. It was past analysis. It was as if chaos and dread night had come again.

Meanwhile the honored dead lay in state in the country's capitol.

On that dreamy, hazy nineteenth of April—suggesting, were it not for the early green leaves, the fresh springing grass, the glad spring caroling of birds, "that sweet autumnal summer which the Indian loved so well"—on that day when sleep wooed one even in the early morn, his obsequies were celebrated in the country's metropolis.

And throughout the land, minute guns were fired, bells tolled, business suspended, and the thoughtful betook themselves to prayer, if so be that what verily seemed a curse might pass from us.

Thence the funeral *cortege* moved to the final resting-place—the remains of a darling son, earlier called, accompanying those of the father—by the route the President had taken

The Funeral Cortège.

Death of the Assassin.

Burial at Springfield.

when first he had been summoned to the chair of State. Before half of the mournful task was done, came tidings that the assassin had been sent to his final account by the avenger's hand, gurgling out, as his worthless life ebbed away, "useless! useless!"

As the sad procession wended its way, where hundreds had gathered in '61, impelled by mere curiosity or by partisan sympathy, thousands gathered, four years later, through affection, through reverence, through deep, abiding sorrow.

Flowers beautified the lifeless remains—dirges were sung—the people's great heart broke out into sobs and sighing.

And so, home to the prairie they bore him whom, when first he was called, the Nation knew not—whom, mid the storms and ragings of those years of civil war, they had learned, had loved, to call father and friend.

In the Oak Ridge Cemetery, in his own Springfield, on the fourth of May, 1865, they laid him to rest, at the foot of a knoll, in the most beautiful part of the ground, over which forest trees—rare denizens of the prairie—look lovingly.

There all that is mortal of ABRAHAM LINCOLN reposes.

"The immortal?" Hail, and farewell!



CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MAN.

Reasons for His Re-election—What was Accomplished—Leaning on the People—State Papers—His Tenacity of Purpose—Washington and Lincoln—As a Man—Favorite Poem—Autobiography—His Modesty—A Christian—Conclusion.

WHAT shall be said, in summing up, of Abraham Lincoln as a statesman and a man? That from such humble beginnings, in circumstances so adverse, he rose to be the Chief Magistrate of one of the leading countries of the world, would

The President as a Man.

Why Re-elected.

were it in any other country, be evidence of ability of the very highest order.

Here, however, so many from similar surroundings have achieved similar results that this fact of itself does not necessarily unfold the man clearly and fully to us. He might have been put forward for that high station as a skillful and accomplished politician, from whose elevation hosts of partisans counted upon their own personal advancement and profit. Or he might have been a successful general; or one possessing merely negative qualities, with no salient points, all objectionable angularities rounded off till that desirable availability, which has at times been laid hold of for the Presidency had been reached; or, yet again, one who had for a long time been in the front ranks of an old and triumphant party, and, therefore, as such matters have been managed with us, admitted to have strong claims upon such party; or, lastly, one who, having for many years schemed and plotted and labored, in season and out of season, for the nomination, at last achieved it.

For such Presidents have been furnished us. But he was neither. And yet the highest point to which an American may aspire he reached. Clearly, then, there must have been something of strength and of worth in the man.

He was reëlected, the first President since Jackson to whom that honor had been accorded. And thirty-two years had passed—eight Presidential terms—since Jackson's reëlection. He was, moreover, reëlected by a largely increased vote.

The years covered by his administration were the stormiest in American history, "piled high," as he himself said, "with difficulties." No President was ever more severely attacked, more unsparingly denounced than he. None more belittled than he. And yet he was triumphantly reëlected. Why? For the same reason that first brought him before the country.

Primarily and mainly because the mass of the people had

Devotion to Principle.

As a Statesman.

Leaning on the People.

unbounded confidence in his honesty and devotion to principle. Though these qualities, it is pleasant to say, have been by no means rare in our Presidents, yet Abraham Lincoln seemed so to speak, so steeped and saturated in them that a hold was thereby obtained upon the common mind, the like of which no other President since Washington had secured. The bitterest opponent of his policy was constrained, if candid, to admit, if not the existence of these qualities, at least the prevailing popular belief in their existence.

What shall be said of him as a statesman ?

That he found the fabric of our National Government rocking from turret to foundation stone—that he left it, after four years of strife such as, happily, the world rarely witnesses, firmly fixed, and sure ; this should serve in some sort, as an answer.

But might not this be owing, or principally so, to the ability of the counsellors whom he gathered about him ? Beyond a doubt the meed of praise is to be shared. Yet we should remember that few Presidents have so uniformly acted of and for themselves in matters of state policy, as did Mr. Lincoln. Upon many questions the opinions of his Cabinet were sought—a Cabinet representing the various shades of thought, the various stages of progress, through which the people, of whom they were the exponents, were passing from year to year—after obtaining which, he would act. But, in most instances, perhaps, he struck out for himself, after careful, conscientious reflection, launching his policy upon unknown seas, quietly assured that truth was with him and that he could not be mistaken. Nor was he often.

Having to feel his way along, for the most part—groping in the dark—he could not push on so fast and far as to leave the people out of breath or staring far in his rear. Still, it must not be understood that he never acted against what was plainly the popular will. The man was not of that mould. Unquestionably in his dealings with the two leading Euro

D a ß

Leben Abraham Lincolns,

des

sechzehnten Präsidenten der Vereinigten Staaten.

Enthaltend

seine frühere Geschichte und politische Laufbahn, sowie seine Reden
Botschaften, Proklamationen und andere mit seiner ereignis=
reichen Administration in Verbindung stehende
offizielle Dokumente.

Von

Frank Crosby,

Rechtsanwalt zu Philadelphia

Nach dem Englischen bearbeitet

von

Prof. Carl Theodor Eben.

„Sei all' dein Streben deinem Land gewidmet,
Gott und der Wahrheit; wenn du alsdann fällst,
Fällst du als heil'ger Märtyrer.“

Philadelphia:

Verlag von John E. Potter,

No. 617 Sansomstraße.

1865.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865, by

JOHN E. POTTER.

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern
District of Pennsylvania.

Das Leben Abraham Lincolns.

Erstes Kapitel.

Kindheit und Eintritt in das Mannesalter.

Einleitende Bemerkungen — Geburt Abraham Lincolns — Er verläßt Kentucky — Wird Arbeiter — Selbsterziehung — Persönliche Charakteristik — Eine zweite Wanderung — Ein Absteher nach New Orleans — Wird ein Commis — Der Black Hawk Krieg — Befaßt sich mit Politik — Seine mehrmalige Erwählung in die Legislatur — Antislaverei-Protest — Praktizirt als Advokat — Charakterzüge — Seine Verheirathung — Kehrt zur Politik zurück — Im Congress.

Die Hauptzüge in dem frühern Leben der Männer, die einen hervorragenden Einfluß auf das Geschick unserer Republik ausgeübt haben, bieten eine überraschende Aehnlichkeit dar. In den Details sind dieselben allerdings verschieden; der allgemeine Umriss ihrer Lebensgeschichte aber ist derselbe — hier wie dort finden wir die „kurzen und einfachen Annalen der Armee.“

Von geringer Herkunft, von zartester Kindheit an Arbeit gewöhnt, mit wenig Gelegenheit, sich eine gute Erziehung anzueignen, kämpften die meisten unabhängig und selbstvertrauend vorwärts, bis sie sich mit eigener Hand den Weg zur Stellung gebahnt hatten, zu der ihre individuellen Anlagen und Talente sie vorzugsweise befähigten. Als ungekünstelte Kinder der Natur bewahrten sie stets in ihren späteren Jahren unter Szenen und Verhältnissen, die ihnen in ihrer Kindheit und ihrem ersten Mannesalter völlig fremd waren, gewisse Eigenthümlichkeiten, die an ihre Herkunft und Erziehung erinnerten. Aus ihrer Sprache oder aus ihren Handlungen — oft aus beiden — ließ sich oft ihre Heimath errathen. Es ist wahr, es hat ihnen oft an dem Schlick des Höflings gemangelt; diesen Mangel aber ersetzte mehr als genügend die unwankelhafte Ehrlichkeit des Mannes. Erschien

ihre Sprache zuweilen schroff und rauh, so war sie dagegen offen und ließ keinen Zweifel aufkommen. Freund wie Feind wußten genau, was ihre Absichten waren. Unerfahren in den Ränken und Schwänken des professionellen Politikers, gingen sie schnurgerade dem Punkte zu, den ihr Urtheil oder ihre Gewissenhaftigkeit bezweckte. Solche Männer haben oft dem Hohn und Spott gleißender Europäer zur Zielscheibe gedient; uns Amerikanern aber sind sie nichts desto weniger theuer, und nichts desto weniger werden sie ihren Rang unter jenen wahrhaft Großen einnehmen, deren Namen allen Guten und Ehrlichen in der ganzen Welt unvergesslich bleiben.

Zu dieser Klasse gehörte vorzugsweise der Staatsmann, mit dessen Leben und Thaten die folgenden Blätter sich beschäftigen.

Abraham Lincoln, der sechszehnte Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten, der Sohn von Thomas und Nancy Lincoln — Ersterer ein Kentucker, Letztere eine Virginierin — war am 12. Februar 1809 nahe Hodgenville, der Hauptstadt des heutigen La Rue County, Kentucky, geboren. Er hatte eine zwei Jahre ältere Schwester, die sich früh verheirathete und bald darauf starb. Sein einziger Bruder, zwei Jahre jünger als er, starb in seiner Kindheit.

Als er neun Jahre alt war, verlor er seine Mutter, nachdem die Familie zwei Jahre früher nach dem damaligen Territorium Indiana ausgewandert war und sich in dem südlichen Theile desselben, nahe dem Ohioflusse, halbwegs zwischen Louisville und Evansville, angesiedelt hatte. Während der dreizehn Jahre, die der Jüngling hier verbrachte, gewöhnte er sich an die Strapazen und Anstrengungen des Grenzlebens. Er war seinem Vater zur Bestellung der Farm behilflich, versäumte dabei aber keine Gelegenheit, seinen Geist zu kräftigen und auszubilden. Er las mit Begierde alle lehrreichen Werke, die er sich verschaffen konnte — meistens an Winterabenden und oft bei dem Lichte des flammenden Kaminfeuers. Als Ersatz für eine zufällige Beschädigung eines geborgten Exemplares von Weemes' „Leben Washingtons,“ — des einzigen in jener Gegend — arbeitete er zwei Tage lang bei dem Eigenthümer des Werkes als Tagelöhner.

Im Alter von zwanzig Jahren hatte er eine Statur von beinahe sechs Fuß und vier Zoll, mit einem verhältnißmäßig schlanken, aber ungemein starken und muskulösen Körperbau. Er war in der That ein jugendlicher Riese unter einem Geschlechte von Riesen. Dabei war seine Ehrlichkeit, Gewissenhaftigkeit und Aufrichtigkeit bereits zum Sprichworte geworden.

Im Jahre 1830 wanderte sein Vater abermals aus. Zuerst ließ er sich ein Jahr lang an dem nördlichen Zweig des Sangamonflusses in Illinois nieder, begab sich dann aber nach Coles County, etwa siebenzig Meilen weiter östlich, an den obern Gewässern des Kaskaskia und Embarras, wo er 1851 in seinem drei- undsiebenzigsten Jahre sein ereignisreiches Leben schloß. Das erste Jahr in Illinois brachte der Sohn bei seinem Vater zu; im nächsten aber half er ein Flachboot bauen, auf welchem er nebst einigen andern Arbeitern eine erfolgreiche Fahrt den Mississippi hinab nach New Orleans und wieder zurück machte. Diese Stadt — damals das Eldorado der westlichen Grenzbewohner — hatte der junge Mann früher schon, in seinem neunzehnten Jahre, besucht.

Von dieser Expedition zurückgekehrt, diente er ein Jahr lang als Commis bei seinem früheren Brodherrn, der in New Salem, zwanzig Meilen unterhalb Springfield, einen Kaufladen hielt und dabei eine Mahlmühle betrieb. Während er so beschäftigt war, erhielt er Kunde von dem Eindringen der Indianer an den westlichen Grenzen des Staates. Dies führte zu dem berühmten Black Hawk Kriege, benannt nach einem alten Häuptlinge der Saes, der eine hauptsächliche Rolle in diesem Kriege führte. Rasch wurde in New Salem und der Umgegend eine Compagnie Freiwilliger aufgeboden, die den jungen Lincoln zum Capitän wählte. Dies war seine erste Promotion. Da sich jedoch die Compagnie bald darauf wieder auflöste, so ließ er sich als Gemeiner anwerben, und erfüllte während des dreimonatlichen Dienstes in dieser seiner ersten kurzen militärischen Campagne getreulich seine Pflichten gegen sein Land.

Mit charakteristischem Humor und Sarkasmus erwähnte er dieser Episode aus seinem Leben in einer Rede im Congress, wäh-

rend des Wahlkampfes von 1848, nachdem die Biographen des General Cass sich bemüht hatten, ihren Abgott zu einem großen Kriegshelden zu machen.

„Beiläufig erwähnt, Herr Sprecher, wissen Sie wohl, daß auch ich ein Kriegsheld bin? Ja, in den Tagen des Black Hawk Krieges fecht auch ich, blutete und kam heim. Die Erwähnung von General Cass' Carriere erinnert mich an meine eigene. Ich war nicht bei Stillman's Niederlage zugegen, war aber nicht weiter davon entfernt, als Cass von Hull's Kapitulation, und gleich ihm sah ich den Platz bald nachher. Es ist ganz gewiß, daß ich mein Schwert nicht zerbrach, denn ich hatte keines zu zerbrechen; allein ich zerbog meine Muskete ganz bedeutend bei einer Gelegenheit. Wenn Cass sein Schwert zerbrach, so ist das so zu verstehen, daß er es aus Verzweiflung zerbrach, während ich meinen Schießprügel durch Zufall zerbog. Wenn Cass mich im Heidelbeerpflücken übertraf, so kam ich ihm im Sturmloch auf die wilden Zwiebeln zuvor. Wenn er wirklich lebendige, fechtende Indianer sah, so war dies mehr als ich von mir rühmen kann; allein ich hatte manch' blutigen Kampf mit den Muskiten; und obschon ich nie durch Blutverlust ohnmächtig wurde, so kann ich doch mit Wahrheit sagen, daß ich oft sehr hungrig war.

„Herr Sprecher, sollte es mir jemals in den Sinn kommen, meinen Schwarz-Kofarde-Föderalismus abzulegen, dessen mich unsere demokratischen Freunde beschuldigen, und dann als Kandidat für die Präsidentschaft aufzutreten, so hoffe ich, daß sie sich nicht über mich lustig machen werden, wie sie es mit General Cass thaten, indem sie mich zu einem Kriegshelden machen.“

Nachdem dieses kleine Abenteuer vorüber war, beschloß Herr Lincoln Advokat zu werden, und ließ sich bald darauf in die Politik ein. Er vertrat mit Eifer die Sache Henry Clay's, und das zwar in einem Staate, der um jene Zeit dem großen Staatsmann und Patrioten auf das Entschiedenste opponirte. Zu gleicher Zeit erhielt er einen höchst schmeichelhaften Beweis seiner eigenen Popularität in seiner unmittelbaren Umgebung, indem er fast einstimmig von seinem Precinct in Sangamon County als Kandidat für die Repräsentantschaft in der Staatslegislatur nominirt

wurde, obschon nur wenig später in derselben Wahlcampagne General Jackson, der demokratische Kandidat für die Präsidentschaft, mit einhundert fünf und fünfzig Stimmen über seinen Mitbewerber Clay siegte.

Während er seinen Rechtsstudien oblag, verdiente er sich mit Landvermessen seinen Unterhalt. Im Jahre 1834, noch ehe er bei Gerichte zugelassen war, ein Hinterwäldler in seiner ganzen Erscheinung, groß, hager und durchaus nicht von einnehmendem Aeußern, wurde er zum ersten Mal in die Legislatur seines Adop-tivstaates gewählt, von welcher Versammlung er, mit einer einzigen Ausnahme, das jüngste Mitglied war. Während dieser Sitzung erhob er sich selten, um zu reden, sondern zog es vor, den ruhigen Beobachter zu spielen. Um diese Zeit wurde er mit Stephen A. Douglas bekannt, der erst kürzlich von Vermont eingewandert war, und mit dem er später eine so hervorragende Rolle zu spielen bestimmt war.

Im Jahre 1836 wurde er zu einem zweiten Termine erwählt. Während dieser Sitzung gab er mit einem seiner Collegen am 3. März 1837 in folgendem Proteste seine Ansichten über die Sklaverei kund :

„Da von beiden Zweigen der General-Assembly während der jetzigen Sitzung Beschlüsse hinsichtlich der einheimischen Sklaverei passirt wurden, so protestiren die Unterzeichneten hiermit gegen die Passirung derselben.

„Sie halten dafür, daß das Institut der Sklaverei nicht nur auf Ungerechtigkeit, sondern auch auf verderblicher Politik begründet ist; gleichwohl aber sind sie der Ansicht, daß die Förderung der Abolitionsdoktrinen eher dem Uebel Vorschub leisten, als dasselbe beseitigen würde.

„Sie halten ferner dafür, daß der Congreß der Vereinigten Staaten unter der Constitution keine Macht hat, sich dem Institut der Sklaverei in den einzelnen Staaten entgegenzusetzen.

„Endlich aber halten sie dafür, daß dem Congreß der Vereinigten Staaten unter der Constitution die Macht zusteht, die Sklaverei in dem Distrikt Columbia abzuschaffen; daß aber diese Macht nicht eher zur Anwendung gebracht werden solle, bis das Volk des

genannten Distriktes sich selbst zu Gunsten eines solchen Schrittes erklärt.“

In den Jahren 1838 und 1840 wurde er abermals erwählt, und erhielt die Stimme seiner Partei für das Sprecheramt. Er war fünfundzwanzig Jahre alt, als er zum ersten Mal erwählt wurde, und hatte sich während seiner wiederholten Amtstermine durch seine Fähigkeit, seine unbestrittene Rechtschaffenheit, sowie durch seine liebenswürdigen Manieren so populär gemacht, daß er in seinem dreißigsten Jahre als der Führer seiner Partei in Illinois angesehen wurde. Seine klaren, logischen Debatten hatten ihm einen bedeutenden Ruf verschafft; sein ihm angeborenes Rednertalent hatte sich entwickelt; sein ernster Eifer für seine Partei führte ihm täglich neue Freunde zu, während seine allgemein anerkannte Herzensgüte ihn selbst mit Männern befreundete, die in der Politik seine Gegner waren.

Während er ein Mitglied der Legislatur war, verlegte er sich mit regem Eifer, soweit es seine anderweitigen Pflichten gestatteten, auf das Studium der Rechte, wozu ihm schon die Nothwendigkeit, sich einen angemessenen Lebensunterhalt zu sichern, anspornte. Im Jahre 1836 wurde er zur Praxis zugelassen und hatte bald vollauf zu thun. In kurzer Zeit war er als ein tüchtiger Rechtsanwalt bekannt, der die Sachlage klar zu durchschauen und sich mit Gewandtheit der günstigen Punkte zu bedienen wußte. Ein gewisser gutmüthiger Humor, den er stets mit Erfolg anzuwenden verstand, verbunden mit gesundem, praktischem Sinn, der schnurstracks auf den Grund der Sache drang, machte ihn zu einem Original. Die Kniffe des bloßen Rhetorikers verschmähend, sprach er vom Herzen zum Herzen und ward daher von Allen, mit denen er in Berührung kam, als ein Mann im besten und weitesten Sinne des Wortes geachtet. Seine Gedanken, seine Manieren und seine Sprache waren ihm eigenthümlich. Von den Ränken und Schwänken des Demagogen hielt er sich entfernt, und das Volk liebte und ehrte ihn als einen der besten Männer. Die Sympathieen seiner Mitbürger waren die seinigen — ihr Wohl sein Streben, und ihre Interessen auf das Engste mit den seinigen verknüpft.

Nachdem er sich permanent zu Springfield, das er fortan als seine Heimath betrachtete, niedergelassen hatte, widmete er sich gänzlich der Praxis und verheirathete sich am 4. November 1842 mit Mary Todd, der Tochter des achtbaren Robert S. Todd, von Lexington, Kentucky, einer Dame von vortrefflicher Erziehung und gewinnenden Manieren.

Ob schon es sein Entschluß gewesen war, sich gänzlich von der politischen Arena zurückzuziehen und die Annehmlichkeiten zu genießen, die nur ein Familienleben zu gewähren vermag, so ließ er sich doch endlich von den ernstesten Bitten der Partei bewegen, die seiner festen Ueberzeugung zufolge auf's Innigste mit den besten Interessen seines Landes identifizirt war, und durchzog 1844 seinen Staat, um für Clay zu agitiren. Später begab er sich nach Indiana und redete täglich, bis die Wahl herannachte, vor äußerst zahlreichen Versammlungen. Die Niederlage des großen Kentuckyers erfüllte ihn mit der tiefsten Trauer, die ihn weit schmerzlicher berührte, als wenn es bloß einer persönlichen Enttäuschung gegolten hätte.

Zwei Jahre später, im Jahre 1846, ließ sich Herr Lincoln bewegen, die Whig-Nomination für den Congreß im Sangamon Distrikt anzunehmen, und wurde mit einer fast beispiellosen Majorität erwählt. Mittlerweile war Texas annexirt worden; der mexikanische Krieg war im Fortgang begriffen und der Tarif von 1842 zurückgezogen worden.

Mit der Eröffnung des dreißigsten Congresses, am 6. Dezember 1847, nahm Herr Lincoln seinen Sitz im untern Hause ein, während Stephan A. Douglas gleichfalls zum ersten Mal als Mitglied des Senats erschien.

Zweites Kapitel.

Im Congreß und auf dem Stump

Der mexikanische Krieg — Innere Verbesserungen — Sklaverei im Distrikt Columbia — Oeffentliche Ländereien — Zieht sich in's Privatleben zurück — Kansas-Nebraska-Gill — Zieht sich zu Gunsten des Senators Crumbull zurück — Bildung der republikanischen Partei — Wird zum Ver. St. Senator nominirt — Eröffnungsrede des Herrn Lincoln — Die Douglas-Campagne — Der Wahlkampf — Ein Tribut für die Unabhängigkeits-Erklärung — Resultat des Wahlkampfes.

Es dauerte nicht lange, bis Herr Lincoln als einer der hervorragendsten westlichen Männer im Repräsentantenhause anerkannt wurde. Er galt in jenen Tagen für einen gründlichen Whig. Da er der Ansicht war, daß Volk's Administration die Angelegenheiten mit Mexiko von Anfang an verdorben habe, so stimmte er zwar in Gemeinschaft mit andern Gliedern seiner Partei für Armeelieferungen und geeignete Belohnungen für unsere tapferen Soldaten, weigerte sich aber auf das Entschiedenste, sich zu einer unqualifizirten Billigung des Krieges von dessen Anfang bis zu seinem Ende nöthigen zu lassen.

Demgemäß brachte er am 22. December 1847 eine Reihe von Beschlüssen ein, bezweckend eine Nachfrage in Bezug auf den Ursprung des Krieges, sowie definitive offizielle Auskunft hierüber. Diese Beschlüsse wurden auf den Tisch gelegt und fanden keine weitere Berücksichtigung. Bei einer Testfrage in Bezug auf das Aufgeben des Krieges ohne materielle Resultate, stimmte er mit der Minorität zu Gunsten des Niederlegens der Beschlüsse.

An allen auf innere Verbesserungen sich beziehenden Fragen nahm er den thätigsten Antheil. Hinsichtlich des unbeschränkten Petitionsrechtes faßte er männlichen Grund und begünstigte eine liberale Politik dem Volke gegenüber in Betreff der Veräußerung öffentlicher Ländereien. Während der Wahl-Campagne von 1848 wirkte er zu Gunsten des Generals Taylor und hielt verschiedene Reden in Neu-England und im Westen.

In der zweiten Sitzung des dreißigsten Congresses beantragte er, daß ein Beschluß, der die Committee über den Distrikt Columbia anwies, eine Bill einzubringen, die den Sklavenhandel im Distrikte verbot, auf den Tisch gelegt würde, und las dann ein Substitut dafür vor. Dieses Substitut enthielt die Form einer Bill, die andordnete, daß keine nicht bereits im Distrikt ansässige Person fortan darin in Sklaverei gehalten werden solle, und zugleich die allmälige Emancipation der im Distrikt gehaltenen Sklaven anstrebte, jedoch so, daß die Eigenthümer derselben entschädigt würden; mit der weitem Bedingung, daß eine Mehrheit der gesetzlichen Stimmgäber im Distrikt bei einer Wahl, die zu diesem Zwecke stattfinden solle, der Passirung der Akte beistimmten. Eine Ausnahme jedoch war in dem Substitute vorgesehen, hinsichtlich der Rechte von Bürgern in Sklavenstaaten, die in öffentlichen Angelegenheiten nach dem Distrikt kämen; diesen sollte gestattet sein, „sich von der nöthigen Dienerschaft für sich selbst und ihre Familien auf ihrem Wege nach dem Distrikt, auf ihrem Wege nach Hause und während ihres Aufenthaltes in dem Distrikt begleiten zu lassen.“

Hinsichtlich der Vergabung von öffentlichen Ländereien an neue Staaten, um der Errichtung von Eisenbahnen und Kanälen Vorschub zu leisten, begünstigte er die Interessen seiner eigenen Constituteuten, jedoch mit solchen Beschränkungen, wie sie die Tragweite dieser Vergabungen erforderte.

Nachdem er eine abermalige Erwählung abgelehnt hatte, zog er sich abermals in das Privatleben zurück und widmete sich wieder seiner Praxis, die durch seine Thätigkeit im Congreß unterbrochen worden war. So lebte er denn zurückgezogen von der Politik während General Taylor's Administration, und nahm auch an den wichtigen Vorfällen im Jahre 1850 keinen oder nur geringen Antheil.

Die Einführung der Kansas-Nebraska-Bill durch Stephen A. Douglas im Jahre 1854 rüttelte ihn jedoch wieder aus seiner Ruhe und gebot ihm auf's Neue, sich zum Kampf für das Recht bereit zu halten. In der Wahl-Campagne dieses Jahres war er einer der thätigsten Führer der Anti-Nebraska-Bewegung. Er

hielt verschiedene Reden, alle von seiner charakteristischen Energie gekennzeichnet, und hatte einen bedeutenden Antheil an den merkwürdigen politischen Veränderungen, die in jenem Jahre in Illinois stattfanden.

Da die Legislatur in jenem Jahre einen Ver. St. Senator zu erwählen hatte, und da zum ersten Male in der Geschichte des Staates die Erwählung eines Gegners der Demokratie im Bereiche der Möglichkeit war, so wandten sich die Blicke der gesammten Opposition auf Abraham Lincoln. Dieser aber beredete mit charakteristischer Selbstaufopferung seine alten Whigfreunde, en masse zu Herrn Trumbull, einem Mann von demokratischen Antecedentien, überzugehen, da dieser sämmtliche Anti-Nebraska-Demokraten auf seiner Seite hatte. Dies geschah und Trumbull wurde erwählt. Herr Lincoln erhielt später die Nomination zum Gouverneur von Illinois, lehnte aber die Ehre zu Gunsten des Col. William H. Bissell ab, der denn auch mit einer entschiedenen Majorität den Sieg davontrug.

Bei der Bildung der republikanischen Partei als solche spielte Herr Lincoln eine thätige und einflussreiche Rolle. Sein Name wurde bei der ersten National-Convention dieser Partei zur Vice-Präsidentschaft vorgeschlagen, fiel aber durch. Er arbeitete nun rastlos während der Campagne von 1856 für die Erwählung Fremont's, auf dessen Electoral-Ticket sein Name obenan stand.

Nachdem sich Senator Douglas in Bezug auf die sogenannte Leecompton-Constitution von Kansas gegen die Administration Buchanan's erklärt und dadurch den Beifall der demokratischen Partei in Illinois erworben hatte (seine Wiedererwählung zum Senator hing lediglich von dem Resultat der Staatswahl in 1858 ab,) beschloß die republikanische Convention jenes Jahres unter donnerndem Applaus, daß Abraham Lincoln, „die erste und einzige Wahl der Republikaner von Illinois zum Bundes-Senator, als Nachfolger von Herrn Douglas sei.“ Am Schlusse der Verhandlungen hielt er folgende Rede, die den ersten Anstoß zu seinem Wahlkampf mit Senator Douglas gab — einem der merkwürdigsten Wahlkämpfe, die je in diesem Lande stattgefunden haben.

„Meine Herren von der Convention:

Wenn wir zuerst wissen könnten, wo wir sind und wohin wir streben, so wären wir besser im Stande, zu beurtheilen, was und wie wir handeln sollten. Es geht jetzt bereits stark in's fünfte Jahr, seit eine Politik inaugurirt wurde, deren erklärte Absicht und vertrauensvolles Versprechen es ist, der Sklaverei-Agitation ein Ende zu machen. Unter der Wirkung jener Politik hatte diese Agitation nicht nur nicht aufgehört, sondern beständig zugenommen. Meiner Ansicht nach wird dieselbe nicht eher aufhören, bis eine Crisis erreicht und passirt sein wird. „Ein Haus, das sich gegen sich selbst zerwirft, kann nicht bestehen.“ Ich glaube, daß diese Regierung nicht auf die Dauer halb mit Sklaverei, halb frei fortbestehen kann. Ich erwarte nicht die Auflösung der Union — ich erwarte nicht den Einsturz des Hauses — aber ich erwarte, daß die innere Zerworfenheit aufhören wird. Die Union muß entweder ganz frei werden, oder ganz der Sklaverei anheimfallen. Entweder müssen die Gegner der Sklaverei der weitem Ausbreitung derselben ein Ziel stecken und sie derart einschränken, daß die öffentliche Meinung sich mit dem Glauben an ihr endliches Aufhören beruhigt, oder die Vertheidiger derselben werden sie vorwärts schieben, bis sie endlich in allen Staaten, den alten sowohl, wie den neuen — im Norden sowohl, wie im Süden — gesetzlich wird.

„Haben wir kein Streben nach der letztern Richtung hin? Betrachte ein Jeder, der Zweifel hegt, jene nun beinahe vollständige Combination — jene Maschinerie, möchte ich fast sagen — zusammengesetzt aus der Nebraska-Doktrine und der Dred Scott Entscheidung. Bedenke er nicht nur, welche Art Arbeit diese Maschine zu leisten vermag, und wie gut sie es vermag, sondern studire er auch die Geschichte ihrer Construction, und suche er, wenn er kann, den ursprünglichen Zweck und die beabsichtigte Wirkung bei den Meistern und Operateuren vom Beginne an aufzuspüren.

„Bis hierher jedoch hat nur der Congreß gehandelt, und eine Ratification durch das Volk, sei es eine wahre oder scheinbare, war unerläßlich, um das schon Gewonnene zu erhalten und noch mehr zu gewinnen. Das Neujahr 1854 fand die Sklaverei aus mehr als der Hälfte der Staaten durch Staats-Constitutionen ausge-

schlossen; desgleichen auch aus den meisten National-Territorien durch ein Congressverbot. Vier Tage später begann der Kampf, der mit dem Widerruf jenes Congressverbots endete. Dies öffnete den Sklavenhaltern sämtliche National-Territorien und war der erste gewonnene Punkt.

„Diese Nothwendigkeit war keineswegs übersehen, sondern weislich und bestmöglich vorgeesehen worden in jenem merkwürdigen Argument von der „Squatter-Souveränität,“ anderwärts auch das „geheiligte Recht der Selbstregierung“ genannt; welch' letztere Phrase, obschon die einzig rechtliche Basis irgend einer Regierung ausdrückend, in der versuchten Geltendmachung so verdreht wurde, daß sie ungefähr so viel bedeutet, daß, wenn ein Mann einen andern zu knechten versucht, kein Dritter befugt sein solle, sich dem zu widersetzen. Dieses Argument wurde der Nebraska-Bill selbst mit folgenden Worten einverleibt: „Der wahre Sinn und Zweck dieser Akte ist, die Sklaverei in irgend ein Territorium oder irgend einen Staat weder einzuführen, noch sie davon auszuschließen, sondern es dem Volke darin vollkommen freizustellen, ihre häuslichen Institute nach eigenem Willen und Gutdünken zu bilden und zu reguliren, insofern dies nicht der Constitution der Vereinigten Staaten widerstrebt.“

„Dann erfolgte ein Schwall von nichts sagenden Worten zu Gunsten der „Squatter-Souveränität“ und des „geheiligten Rechtes der Selbstregierung.“

„Aber,“ sagten Oppositionsmitglieder, „laßt uns specifischer sein — laßt uns die Bill so amendiren, daß darin ausdrücklich erklärt werde, dem Volke der Territorien stehe das Recht zu, die Sklaverei auszuschließen.“ „Nicht doch,“ sagten die Freunde der Maßregel und stimmten gegen das Amendment, das denn auch durchfiel.

„Während die Nebraska-Bill durch den Congress ging, passirte durch das Ver. St. Bezirksgericht für den Distrikt Missouri ein Rechtsfall, in welchem es sich um die Freiheit eines Negers handelte, dessen Meister ihn zuerst in einen freien Staat und dann in ein Territorium brachte, in welchem jenes Congressverbot zu Rechte bestand, und ihn in beiden lange Zeit als Sklaven hielt.

Sowohl die Nebraska-Bill, wie der Rechtsfall kamen in demselben Monat, Mai 1854, zur Entscheidung. Der Reger hieß „Dred Scott,“ unter welchem Namen jene Entscheidung des Oberbundesgerichtes heutzutage bekannt ist.“

„Vor der darauf folgenden Präsidentenwahl wurde das Gesetz vor dem Oberbundesgericht der Ver. Staaten argumentirt; die Entscheidung indessen wurde bis nach der Wahl verschoben. Doch vor der Wahl hat Senator Trumbull in der Senatshalle den Hauptvertheidiger der Nebraska-Bill, seine Meinung zu äußern, ob das Volk eines Territoriums auf constitutionelle Weise die Eklaverei von seinen Grenzen ausschließen könne, und Dieser antwortete: „Das ist eine Frage für das Oberbundesgericht.“

„Die Wahl kam heran. Herr Buchanan wurde erwählt und das „indorsement“ war gesichert. Dies war der zweite gewonnene Punkt. Dem Indorsement mangelten indessen nahezu vierhundert Tausend Stimmen zu einer Volksmajorität, woher es denn nicht eben sehr zuverlässig und befriedigend war. Der abgehende Präsident rief dem Volke in seiner letzten Jahresbotschaft so nachdrücklich wie möglich das Gewicht und die Autorität des Indorsements in das Gedächtniß.

„Das Oberbundesgericht tagte wieder; es kündigte jedoch die Entscheidung nicht an, sondern begann ein neues Argument. Die Inauguration des Präsidenten kam heran, noch aber hielt das Gericht mit der Entscheidung zurück; der neue Präsident aber ermahnte das Volk in seiner Inauguraladresse, sich der nahen Entscheidung zu fügen, wie auch dieselbe ausfallen möge. Wenige Tage darauf kam die Entscheidung.

„Dies war der dritte gewonnene Punkt.

„Der Autor der Nebraska-Bill ergriff bald darauf eine Gelegenheit, in diesem Capitol eine Rede zu halten, in welcher er die Dred Scott Entscheidung indossirte und alle Opponenten dagegen heftig mit Schmähungen überhäufte. Der neue Präsident ergriff ebenfalls die erste Gelegenheit, um in dem Silliman Brief jene Entscheidung zu indossiren und auszulegen; zu gleicher Zeit drückte er seine Verwunderung aus, daß sich überhaupt mißbilligende Meinungen darüber kund gäben. Endlich entstand ein Streit zwischen dem

Präsidenten und dem Urheber der Nebraska-Bill über die bloße Frage, ob die Lecompton-Constitution im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes von dem Volke von Kansas gemacht worden sei oder nicht; und in diesem Streite erklärte Letzterer, daß er nichts Anderes beanspruche, als einen freien Meinungsausdruck für das Volk, und daß es ihm vollkommen gleichgültig sei, ob die Sklaverei eingeführt oder ausgeschlossen werde. Diese letztere Erklärung, daß es ihm gleichgültig sei, ob die Sklaverei eingeführt oder ausgeschlossen werde, kann ich mir nur als eine schlaue Definition der Politik denken, die er der öffentlichen Meinung aufzotroyren wollte — das Prinzip, für das er, wie er uns sagt, schon so viel gelitten hat und bereit ist, bis zu seinem Ende zu leiden.

„Und wohl mag er sich an dieses Prinzip festklammern. Wenn er väterliche Gefühle besitzt, muß er sich daran festklammern. Dieses Prinzip ist der einzige Felsen, der ihm von seiner ursprünglichen Nebraska-Doktrine übrig bleibt. Unter der Dred Scott Entscheidung trat die „Squatter-Souveränität“ aus der Existenz, stürzte zusammen, wie ein temporäres Gerüst, wie die Lehmform in der Gießerei, die ihren Zweck erfüllt hat und in den losen Sand zurückfällt; sie half einen Wahlsieg herbeiführen und wurde dann den Winden anheim gegeben. Sein letzter Kampf, den er gemeinsam mit den Republikanern gegen die Lecompton-Constitution führte, hatte Nichts von der ursprünglichen Nebraska-Doktrine zur Grundlage. Jener Kampf wurde über einen gewissen Punkt geführt — das Recht eines Volkes, sich seine Constitution selbst zu machen — und über diesen Punkt herrschte nie eine Meinungsverschiedenheit zwischen ihm und den Republikanern.

„Die verschiedenen Punkte der Dred Scott Entscheidung in Verbindung mit Senator Douglas' sorgloser Politik bilden die Maschine in ihrem gegenwärtigen Fortschrittszustand. Die wesentlichen Punkte in dieser Maschine sind:

„Erstens, daß kein Negerflave, als solcher von Afrika importirt, und kein Abkömmling eines solchen jemals Bürger eines Staates sein kann in dem Sinne des Wortes, wie die Constitution der Ver. Staaten es auslegt.

„Dieser Punkt wurde ausgeheckt, um den Neger in jedem mög-

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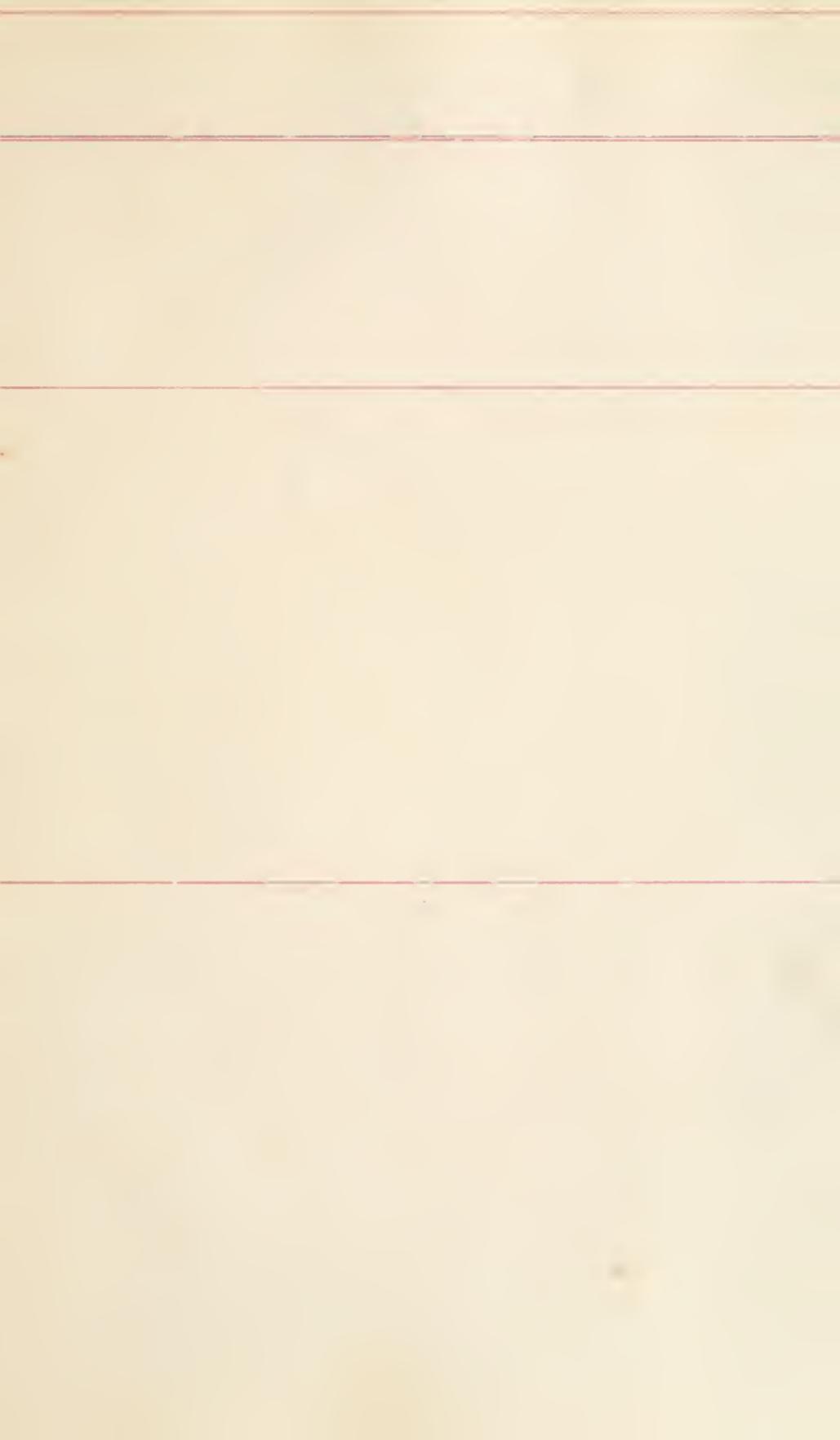


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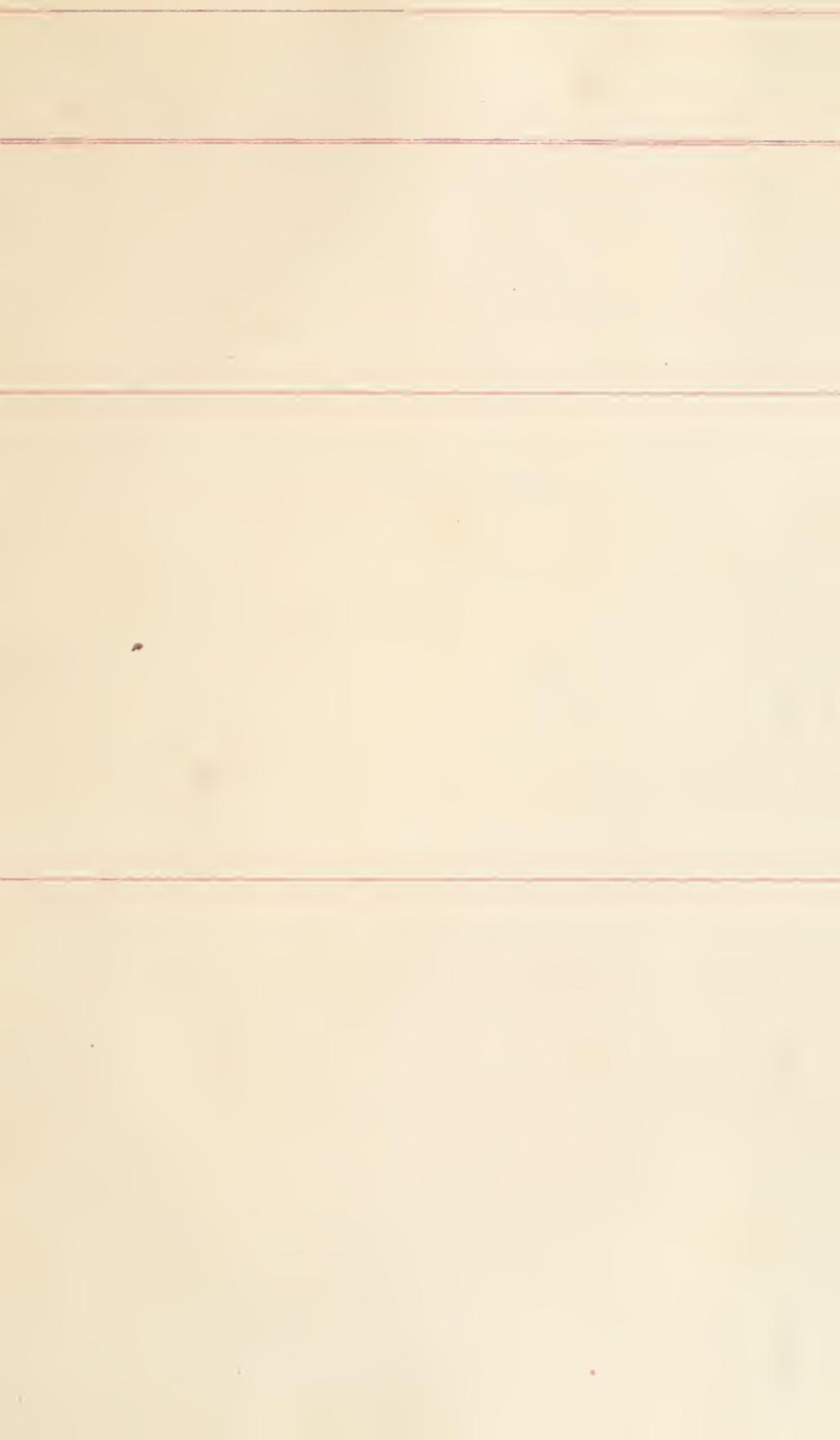
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